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Star Chamber in Pall Mall

Merlyn Rees could hardly have made a worse job of ensuring that justice is seen to be done in the cases of Mark Hosenball and Philip Agee if he had decreed that the pair must suffer trial by ordeal. The representations available in camera to the two Americans under the 1971 Immigration Act amount to a ghoulish game of blind man's bluff. Served notice only of the maximum possible sentence, but ignorant of the charges laid against them, they are ordered to defend themselves without the right to cross-examine their prosecutors, or to call witnesses in their defence. Then they are left to deduce from the expressions of three British worthies what their judges' recommendations will be. At the end of this charade stands Merlyn Rees, at liberty to ignore, if necessary, the 'advice' of his assessors.

The Home Office claim that an open trial, by its very nature, would be self-defeating to the prosecutors' interests. But by defending our democracy behind closed doors suspicion is only aroused about the motives of the inquisitors. The insubstantiality of the charge doubles the suspicion. A number of MPs have inquired of what exactly the two men must prove their innocence. However, faced by the icon of National Security, that full stop to any logical discussion, confusion still reigns. At one moment the rumour is that Agee is guilty of misdemeanours with the IRA, next with the Cubans, and now he is portrayed as a KGB double agent, betraying a Nato spy ring in a scenario whose detail is too implausible for even the tawdriest thriller. Clearly, like so much in retrenchment Britain, the right to a fair trial is discretionary.

In the absence of any substantive charges of threatening British security that warrant deportation, it is reasonable to assume that the Security Services have hatched the garbled charges at the behest of their close colleagues, and former pupils, the beleagured CIA. By pressing these charges we can only be serving the interests of American national security, as interpreted by the CIA. Or can the Home Office really be so blithe as to assume that there is a mutuality of interests, not just between the CIA and British Intelligence but also between the British and CIA conception of democracy? If this is the case we, by association, are endorsing the massive crimes and abridgement of rights admitted by the CIA and condemned by the US Congress. There is no reason to believe that the CIA have any greater respect for British civil liberties than those of any other country. For the past 25 years the CIA have patently failed to represent either the free world or democracy, but only artless American imperialism. By means of assassination, bribery, kidnapping and subversion, dictatorships have been buttressed, civil wars kindled and elections either manipulated or snuffed out.

This catalogue of criminal arrogance has become so familiar largely thanks to investigative journalism carried out in the teeth of the kind of CIA censorship which now confronts Agee and Hosenball. Both have added to the unsettling evidence of CIA interference in British civil affairs. Their real crime in the CIA's eyes is that they themselves have tried to restrict the CIA to legitimate intelligence work by a form of guerrilla journalism which discloses the agency's methods of operation. That they are being silenced can only suggest British Intelligence has become so reliant on the CIA that it cannot refuse the favour. But the overall effect of any deportations will be to intensify British suspicion of the CIA and of our own Government's prodigal misuse of the shibboleth of security. In the last resort it comes down to a matter of trust; Callaghan and Rees have behaved in such a way that even their own bemused supporters can point to nothing else. So it is worth remembering Callaghan's defence of Rudi Dutschke in the Commons in January 1971: 'There is a difference between the Conservative side of the House and this side. Your side prefers security while ours prefers our liberal traditions.' It is sad to learn that these traditions stand up only against Tory encroachment. The Home Secretary's latest *fiat* has diminished liberty without increasing security, and it is only too easy to believe that this was the original intention.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Attaboy, Roy!

Do you enjoy politics? Do politicians enjoy politics? Does enjoyment have (and here I would like to introduce a phrase I have learnt from Sally Oppenheim) a *viability niche* in this day and age? Is there much relish in the job, much pleasure to be gained? I wondered about this the other day when I came across the following passage in Bagehot's essay on Macaulay.

> The essence of Toryism is enjoyment. Talk of the ways of spreading a wholesome Conservatism throughout this country: give painful lectures, distribute wearisome tracts (and perhaps this is as well – you may be able to give an argumentative answer to a few objections, you may diffuse a distinct notion of the dignified dullness of politics); but as far as communicating and establishing your creed are concerned – try a little pleasure. The way to keep up old customs is, to enjoy old customs; the way to be satisfied with the present state of things is, to enjoy that state of things.

It appears that this advice has been long since ignored by the Tories. Might it not be a good idea for Labour to take it up? Tony Benn enjoys himself – he quite exudes enjoyment – but the rest seem to think that enjoyment is unpatriotic. They are more interested in the 'dignified dullness', and with more emphasis on the dullness than the dignity.

Yet some of them seem custom-built for enjoyment. Roy Hattersley, for instance. Very enjoyable. One thinks of cream buns, Harrogate toffee, bags of scoff. Now, however, there's a new-look, slim-line Hattersley, who has taken up running before breakfast. He even sometimes runs in office hours. His civil servants hear him, thundering down the corridors. This athletic Hattersley seems on fine public form. He entered the chamber on Monday night with all the appearance of a man who relished his task. Smiles all round, feet straight up on the despatch box, and he settled back to hear about *la* Oppenheim's viability niche. The chamber was more or less empty, and a certain enjoyable informality enlivened the proceedings. It was amusing. Hattersley was on the side of competition and the free play of market forces. Oppenheim had therefore to find some way of attacking a perfectly respectable Tory argument. She chose to play the man, rather than the ball. Hattersley stuck to the argument (although he did on one occasion refer to Oppenheim as 'the honourable gentleman', which I thought was a bit below the belt). He was on the right side of the argument. He won the argument. And yet he apparently did not much enjoy himself.

The reason, as far as I can gather, has something to do with Hattersley's sensitivity to criticism. He's had a lot recently, and he doesn't like it. He does not believe that all publicity is good publicity, and he loathes being misrepresented. He dislikes hitting the headlines – a surprisingly common trait in politicians. (Crosland, for instance. You'd think that Crosland had had as good a press as any politician could wish for. He's always treated with great respect, even when he behaves with such oily, sickening deference to a man like Kissinger. And yet Crosland believes that he's been positively martyred in the public prints.) The press has sometimes portrayed Hattersley as a man who relishes a row. In the present row over bread prices he shows every sign of being thoroughly fed up.

It is his first major row since he inherited Shirley Williams's department, and it has taken the department somewhat by surprise. For two months there were long negotiations on the subject. Lord Goodman was the bakers' champion. There were endless meetings. Hattersley was advised that if he froze bread prices in December (which he did) there would be all hell to pay, whereas if he released discount restrictions the move would be welcomed. As it turned out, the obstacle of Lord Goodman was not insuperable. The freezing of bread prices passed off with a minimum of fuss.

From the start, the discount restrictions proved more problematic. The bakers did not seem to live in the same world as Sir Keith Joseph. They were afraid of the free play of market forces. They thought that if discount restrictions were abandoned altogether they would all be set at each others' throats and that there might be serious casualties among their members. They actually wanted statutory controls. Hattersley on the other hand thought that the system, whereby the minimum price of bread was strictly protected, amounted to a cushioning of the industry at the expense of the public. On the question of competition as a socialist instrument he is undogmatic. In some cases competition is useful. In others, control is appropriate. He was advised that if control of the minimum price was relaxed, the price of bread in supermarkets *might* fall, and would certainly not rise as much as was otherwise predicted. As far as the small shops were concerned, some difficulty might well be felt. But it was thought that bread was anyway a loss leader in small shops, nobody had ever made much profit on it, and that people would continue to buy *some* bread at the local shop whatever the difference in price. Bread was, after all, the sort of thing one nipped out to buy a loaf of.

So they persuaded the bakers to open the window and let in the fresh air of competition. And they thought that they had squared all other parties as well. Their prediction that prices would fall was confirmed by the unforeseen action of the distributors, the United Road Transport Union, who decided to boycott those stores which offered the 17p loaf. These men stood to lose on their commission, which is worked out as a percentage of the value of the good delivered. One might argue that if bread was cheaper, more of it might be bought. Certainly, however, the delivery men's commission will not rise by as much as it would have done had the old system been retained. In this sense, the interests of the delivery men are at odds with those of the general public. The more inflation, the more money they make. The consumer of bread, on the other hand, is against inflation.

Well now, are we in a viability niche or a conflict situation? It must be said that even in the cabinet there are some doubts about the ultimate wisdom in letting competition rip in the baking industry. And yet it is not from the industry itself, or from the retailers, that the present opposition has come. Instead there is a conflict situation, involving the URTU against the rest. In the opinion of this column, it is quite unfair to blame Hattersley for 'an amazing cock-up' (*Daily Mirror*). It is after all his job to try and intervene to keep certain prices down. It's the sort of thing Labour governments are supposed to do. And if the interests of his department in this case do really clash with those of the delivery men, perhaps one has simply to recognise that there is an irreconcilable conflict of interests. Baking, like Hattersley himself, is a shrinking industry.

As for life at the Department of Prices, it appears to suit Hattersley very well. There was much in the Foreign Office job that he found tedious (the endless visits to the opera with foreign potentates, the lectures on civil liberties from Stalinist diplomats) and some tasks he found objectionable. He thought the Cod War justified but utterly hopeless, and therefore fought to be allowed to lose it. (As someone remarked this week, he's become something of an anti-Christ – first he loses us the fishes, now it's the loaves.)

Since joining the cabinet he has been able to take part in the Great Economic Battle, fighting on the same flank as the Crosland Light Infantry. He is in a stronger position, as the head of an economic department, than he perhaps would have been in the job he is said to covet most – education. He is now engaged on the negotiations for a new approach to prices policy, to replace the present one next summer. However, for some reason or other, he has given up bread.

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John Griffith*

One House of Parliament

The effrontery of the privileged is the most ancient characteristic of our society. Now the House of Lords is being presented by Lord Carrington as the guardian of our liberties against extreme governments of the Left or of the Right. The thought is less than comforting. Although it is not difficult to see Lord Carrington, supported no doubt (amongst many others) by that splendid democrat my Lord Hailsham who sheds and dons the ermine when his political career demands, as our steadiest armour against the varied assaults of those who would subvert our constitution, our way of life, or the very structure of our society as he knows it, it is less easy to see him as a latter-day St George leading us to that liberated future where privilege and money and class are no more.

But being beastly to Conservative peers, though necessary, is only the most obvious task, perhaps the least important. Facing them across the Upper House are, with very few exceptions, the ragtag and bobtail of the Labour Party, a collection of superannuated widows, defeated and discredited politicians, political hangers-on to the coat-tails of our most recent ex-Prime Minister, rich men and poor academics, not one of them able to achieve his or her membership of that House except through inheritance or the operation of a system of patronage which, as Nigel Birch said a few years ago, would have made Walpole envious.

Nor are these characters the end of the line. How may backbench Labour MPs let it be known, generally by the most direct of methods, that they are in the market for life peerages? And how do you suppose the possibility of the exercise of patronage in their favour affects their attitude to party, to electorate, to the great questions of state?

On neither the Conservative nor the Labour side, nor among the bishops, nor (indeed not) on the political cross-benches – those 'political *castrati*' (as Michael Foot called them), whose principal attribute is their constitutional, built-in, worn-as-a-flag incapacity to decide where they stand – are there to be found any significant number worthy to be entrusted with the maintenance, let alone the enlargement, of the liberties of the common man.

Of course, we are all reformers now. We could have a Conference of All Parties and work out a Grand Scheme, 'democratic' and 'progressive'; and looking to the future, have a House of all those talented men and women who presently manage our affairs rather more covertly. We could expose the anatomy for Britain. (They might not thank us for that.)

And speaking of power, what should we give to this renovated, reinvigorated, House of All Talents? One year's delay on all legislation passed by the representative assembly? Two years, since the Upper House is now better constructed? Surely, not nothing? Not, mind you, that all the great men would refuse membership if the powers were negligible. There would still be advantages in being called Lord, or even Senator, for doing nothing.

If we seek to reform, think of all the questions that could be raised by those who want essentially to retain its present character. I have already mentioned election or appointment to membership. Or both. If elected, and the party with a majority in the Commons does not have a majority in the Lords, who governs and how? If appointed, shall the Government always have a majority in the Lords? If so, shall it be overall or shall the cross-benchers hold the balance? Whether appointed or elected, shall members be paid? Same as MPs, or more, or less? What shall be its relationship to the Scottish and Welsh

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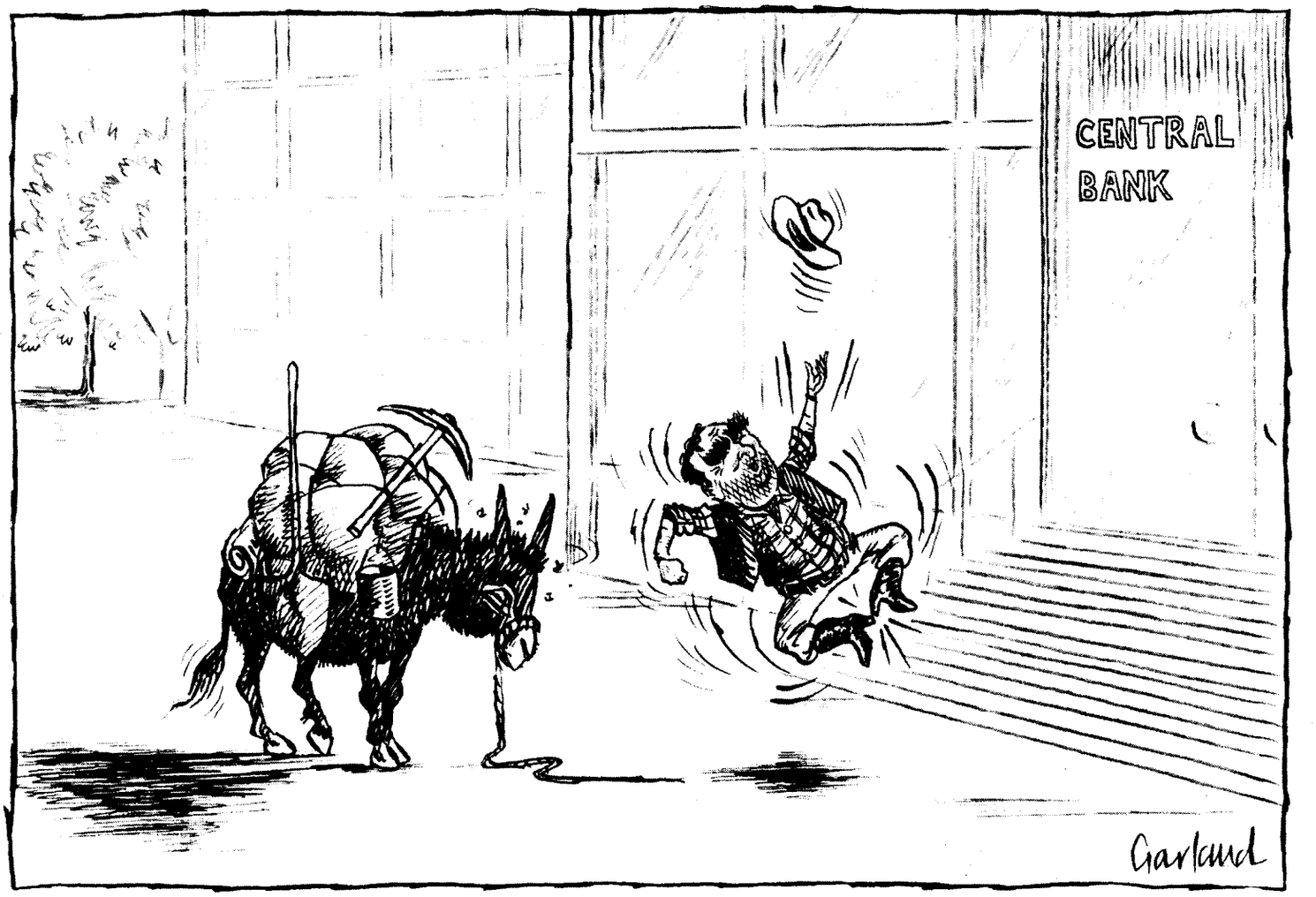

'GOLD!'

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Assemblies? To the European Parliament? Given those questions, and many others, the conservators of a conservative Upper House will have ample ammunition to frustrate any radical reform.

The conventional justification for the second Chamber is that it performs a valuable revising function. On the evidence of two recent surveys – Janet Morgan's *The House of Lords and the Labour Government 1964-70* and my *Parliamentary Scrutiny of Government Bills* – I believe this is very largely nonsense. 'The notion,' said Michael Foot in 1969 'that we cannot do away with the House of Lords because of the revising requirements is quite wrong.'

First, the number of Commons' Bills amended in any way by the Lords is less than half. In 1964-70 there were 226 such bills and only 98 were amended.

Secondly, the time spent by the Lords on many Commons' Bills is small. In 1968-69 and 1970-71, some 47 Bills were considered in committee, on report and on third reading. Of these, the Lords spent less than one hour on 18 Bills and less than four hours on 36 Bills. So on only 11 Bills did the Lords spend much time and some of those were highly controversial and the debates were little concerned with genuine improving amendments.

Thirdly, in 1964-70, the Lords in committee moved 2,553 amendments and of these the Commons accepted all but 125. Clearly the overwhelming mass of amendments are 'tidying-up' ones for which a second chamber is unnecessary. A detailed study of individual sessions soon shows this.

Nevertheless it is undoubtedly necessary that revision of Bills which have passed through the committee stage of the Commons should take place. Partly this is tidying-up, but also it is to enable the Government, the Opposition and the affected interests to reconsider. I suggest that, after the committee stage in the Commons has been completed, then if any amendments were made in committee, the report stage should not take place for a period which, in the case of controversial Bills, might be as long as three months. Bills introduced towards the beginning of the session could have their report stage before the end of July. Others would have to wait until after the summer recess. Certainly this might result in a somewhat longer session (perhaps 13 months). But there would not seem to be any particular difficulty about this. In short, the case for a second revising chamber has been much overstated and single chamber could adequately do the necessary legislative job. With Michael Foot (3 February 1969), 'I am a fervent abolitionist'.

The most likely outcome of a reform of structure is the emergence of a predominantly appointed or indirectly elected Upper House consisting of industrialists, trade union leaders, representatives from the professions, representatives from the larger local or regional authorities. Consider what that would do to the hard-won and as yet so weak democratic principle of the people's ultimate authority.

Not only would such an Upper House inevitably exercise power and influence which should reside in the assembly of the directly elected Members in the Commons. We should see the emergence of a permanent coalition of the Great Men of the Realm. Is that what we want?

For the Labour Party the way forward is to abolish the whole mishmash of privilege, patronage, pomposity and self-importance which is the House of Lords and to refuse to replace it by another institution in which those four characteristics would inevitably be perpetuated. Just for once, let us do the obvious, democratic and socialist thing.

Mary Holland

Mr Mason's Petticoat Army

Mr Roy Mason's view, expressed at a dinner of the Corporation's Governors in Belfast, that if the BBC were to stop reporting the activities of the various para-military groups in Northern Ireland the Nasties would soon pack up and fade away, is the closest the Secretary of State has come to enunciating a policy for his troubled province.

In most political situations Mr Mason's description of the BBC's reporting as disloyal might be a matter for simple journalistic concern. In the context of the latest statistics from Northern Ireland, which show that last year more people died than in any year since 1972, it is difficult to feel quite so detached about them. Still, in one respect at least the figures must have been a cause for satisfaction to the ex-Minister of Defence and his cabinet colleagues. It was a comparatively good year for the British Army. Of the 295 people who got killed, 14 were soldiers. By far the greatest number of deaths were simply sectarian. In other words the Irish killing the Irish. This matches up rather neatly to Mr Callaghan's view that the Irish will have to be left to sweat it out for a while if they are ever to come to their senses. It also accounts for the increasing anger which is now being expressed by churchmen and politicians on both sides of the border about British policy – or lack of it – in the North.

Lacking even the glimmer of a political idea for Northern Ireland beyond censoring the BBC, Mr Mason has turned for political cover to the only fig-leaf available – the Peace People. Undoubtedly the women who have marched and prayed and rung bells for peace have given expression to a great groundswell of emotion even if a large part of this has been in inverse proportion to the distance they have found themselves from the troubled areas of Derry and Belfast. They have travelled tirelessly in Europe and America, raised money from peace-hungry Norwegians, been fêted by concerned Germans and received the final accolade of approval from Mr Jack Jones and Her Majesty the Queen. What they haven't done – nor could they be expected to – is to bring peace any closer.

All this is not to sneer at them nor to dismiss their importance. It would be difficult not to be moved by the overwhelming emotion of the marches, particularly the early ones through the battle-scarred slums of Belfast. It would be impossible not to wish them well. As an expression of the desperate yearning for an end to the violence they are, and will continue to be, important. What they are not is a substitute for a political policy on the part of the British Government, and it is disturbing to see that there is now a very real danger of them becoming exactly that.

Last week, smarting from criticism of their globe-trotting, fund-raising, TV-sermonising activities, the Peace People presented a strategy for the year ahead. In what amounted to a political manifesto they suggested that political parties were no longer relevant in Northern Ireland: that what was needed was to build small community groups concentrating on local issues and building political strength from the ground up. Mr Trevor Jones and those Liberals who emerged in the halcyon days of community politics will recognise the strategy, though even Jones-the-Vote might be a bit taken aback by the idea of a 'Peace Parliament' to be elected by local peace groups which will render ordinary constitutional politics irrelevant.

All this has been given tacit encouragement by the Northern Ireland Office, which is not entirely surprising since it dovetails with the view, fashionable in the cabinet since the breakdown of Merlyn Rees's Constitutional Convention, that Northern Ireland's politicians are really 'hopeless' and that there is no hope of real progress until they fade from the political stage. Mr Roy Mason is known to hope privately that the Peace People will stand in the forthcoming local government elections though not even he has yet expressed a view on the Peace Parliament.

One wonders how he, or indeed Mr Callaghan would deal with the Peace People if they were suddenly to appear in their own constituencies and describe the established politicians as irrelevant. How, come to that, would Mr Jack Jones react if they announced a blueprint to reform the Transport and General Workers Union from the ground up rendering himself, Moss Evans and other such redundant? The question hardly needs to be answered. Northern Ireland's politicians may not be as reasonable or as obedient as Mr Callaghan could desire but they know, indeed they represent, the bloody stubborn intractable realities of th

This Ireland

☐ An excerpt from a recent set of regulations issued for a race meeting in Dublin's Mondello Park: 'Practice will take place on Saturday afternoon, unless it rains. In which case practice will be on Saturday morning.' – *Motor* (C. H. Cooper)

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situation which exists in Northern Ireland and which will continue to exist when the Peace Women have marched and sung in every city in Europe and beyond.

Even if Roy Mason is too thick or too uncaring to comprehend all this, Mr Callaghan with his experience of Ireland and his innate political skills knows it very well. He may not relish the prospect of sitting down yet again to try and hammer out a political solution with men whom he regards as mulish and unrealistic, like John Hume, Paddy Devlin, William Craig and the Rev. Ian Paisley. But he knows that it is only by long, patient negotiations with such men that a political way forward can be found, which is the only way that peace will follow. It can't be negotiated with the messianic platitudes of the Peace People's chief guru, Ciaran McKeown, or the pretty television beatitudes of Betty Williams, stirring though these may be. In which case Mr Callaghan must also realise that the British Government is playing either a very cynical or a very dangerous game when it encourages the Peace People into active politics and consistently humiliates and downgrades Northern Ireland's politicians.

It wasn't mere coincidence or a rush of blood to the chilly heart of the Environment Secretary which caused the official ban on Irish meetings in Trafalgar Square, imposed in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday, to be lifted before Christmas to allow Joan Baez, Diana Rigg and the Strawbs to lead the singing at the Peace People's London rally. Nor was the approving pat on the back handed out by the Queen on Christmas Day. For in the short term the Peace Women have been a godsend to the Government and one which perhaps it deserved, or at any rate badly needed. At a crucial time when people might well have begun to ask what on earth Britain was up to in Northern Ireland they gave the impression that something spontaneously hopeful was emerging in the province. They provided a focus, gave something for people to do both in Ireland and abroad to make them feel that they were making a positive contribution to peace. This has been particularly important in Southern Ireland, where the marchers have aroused a huge emotional response and have often diverted the helpless anger against Britain which is a more usual response to events in the North.

The Peace Women have given the Government and Mr Mason a breathing space to think about what the British Government should be doing now in Northern Ireland. As a bonus, they have created an enormous groundswell of goodwill which is very important, as emotion publicly expressed by thousands of people, particularly in a situation as desperate as Northern Ireland always is. What they haven't done, cannot do, and should not be encouraged to believe they can do, is to provide the major political initiative which is necessary in Northern Ireland if the terrible flow of statistics is ever to be staunched. That is Britain's moral and political responsibility. In particular it is Mr Roy Mason's. It is time he stopped hiding behind the petticoats of a lot of brave women and faced up to it.

Belfast

Robin Cook

Lost in the Viennese Woods

For three years now representatives of Nato and the Warsaw Pact have met regularly at Vienna in the opulent setting of a baroque building of the imperial period to discuss how they might trim the troop levels of modern Europe. This is not the first attempt at a negotiated reduction of Europe's standing armies, since the credit for that probably belongs to Tsar Alexander I who in the aftermath of Waterloo floated the idea of a conference to cut the force levels which had been stimulated by the Napoleonic Wars.

However, the current talks at Vienna on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) are without doubt the most prolonged attempt in history. To date there have been ten rounds in the talks, involving the participants in over 120 formal plenary sessions and several times that number of informal cocktail parties. Mercifully for the sanity of the diplomats they can expect regular rotation to other postings and the British ambassador was replaced at the start of the last round. On present rates of progress the incumbent will have a secure job for the foreseeable future.

The present impasse is largely a product of what the former US Secretary of Defence James Schlesinger termed 'a tangled web of motivations'. It is now plain that Nato decided to seek the talks not in order to negotiate troop reductions as much as to put the cap on domestic pressures for unilateral cuts. No less an authority than General T. R. Milton, first chairman of Nato Working Group on MBFR, has gone on record with the admission that 'the work was begun in Nato in 1970 with one principal objective: the pacification of Senator Mansfield who seemed determined to cut US forces in Europe'.

Judged as a ploy to stifle domestic demands for troop withdrawals the Vienna talks have been an outstanding success. In Britain White Papers over half-a-dozen years have dismissed calls for a cut in BAOR by insisting that we must first await the conclusion of the multilateral talks. In America the only man so far disarmed by the Vienna negotiations has been former Senator Mansfield himself. Thus the paradox emerges that talks about force reductions become the means of freezing the very force levels they are intended to reduce. Indeed at the end of the latest round the Western side tabled new figures of the level of Nato forces which actually revealed a slight *increase* in troop numbers since the start of the talks on troop reductions in 1973.

The problem for the negotiations is that the ambivalent motivation of the West in setting up the talks tended to create a framework which contains its own inherent contradictions. The first of these is that because of its prime concern with the military balance in Central Europe the West sought a tight geographic boundary for the negotiations which highlights Soviet superiority within the area, but neglects the mobility of modern armies and the range of their armaments.

Thus Britain and France are both outside the guidelines area and all troops stationed in either of them, which includes the bulk of their national armies, are left out of the reckoning at Vienna, which must appear to the Soviet general staff as a very dubious method of calculation. Conversely, all Russia is similarly excluded from the reckoning and clearly any agreement which permitted the Soviets to redeploy those troops they withdrew from Europe just behind their own frontier would scarcely provide the West with an adequate return for actually disbanding an equivalent portion of the Bundeswehr.

However the most serious flaw in the concept of a geographic boundary is that the tactical nuclear weapons, which are the very weapons capable of wreaking the greatest devastation within the area, are not necessarily stationed within the boundary. In December 1975 the US offered to withdraw from Germany some of her F4 planes, as part of the West's proposal on MBFR. Yet Russia cannot have failed to notice that an equivalent number of F-111 planes was sent to Britain from the US in the course of 1976. Both planes are equally capable of delivering a nuclear warhead on to a target in Eastern Europe, and to those who are likely to have such a missile dropped on them it must appear rather academic whether the plane that carried it took off from an airfield in Britain or within the MBFR guidelines boundary.

At the same time the Russians have been busy replacing their ageing Intermediate Range Missiles with more formidable SS-20s, which carry more warheads, are more accurate, and since they are mobile are also less vulnerable. They are not only capable of descending within the guidelines area but are clearly designed to do just that, but since they are deployed on Russian soil they are excluded from the Vienna talks. Manifestly no serious arms control negotiation can continue indefinitely to neglect the most powerful weapons relevant to the region.

The other institutional obstacle to progress at Vienna is that the talks are rigidly structured round the two blocs and have thus preserved the confrontation between alliances even within the context of arms control. Nato diplomats cheerfully assert that a positive product of the negotiations is that the preparatory discussions have served to promote cohesion of the Western alliance, apparently without any perception that this may be a rather ironic result of what is ostensibly an attempt to reduce the motor force of the alliances. No doubt the talks have provided the same tonic for the Warsaw Pact.

However, all such obstacles are overshadowed by the enormous central problem

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that both sides have engaged in a negotiation to achieve parity without any consensus on what is meant by parity. The Western definition is one of seductive simplicity, an almost mathematical purity. To the West parity is a common number of uniformed troops within the guidelines boundary, a number which they have specified as 700,000 each. Unfortunately for the acceptance of such a definition, its achievement would require the East to withdraw two or three times as many troops as the Nato participants, and it must be doubted whether any Russian leadership could afford to strike such a bargain, even if it wished to do so. In any event such a purely quantitive approach would leave untouched the superior performance which the Soviets perceive in Western aircraft, anti-tank missiles, and tactical nuclear weapons; however, if this is of genuine concern to them their failure for a full year to respond to a Nato offer to include aircrews and nuclear systems in the first withdrawals is both puzzling and disappointing.

The Russians may, of course, be inhibited from agreeing to ground force reductions for fear of its effect on their satellites, which takes us to the central question of the real role of the Red Army. Is it in Europe to deter Russia's enemies or is it there to intimidate her allies? When the Vienna talks first began the Soviet Union itself openly argued for the exclusion of Hungary from the guidelines area for the explicit reason that the four Russian divisions stationed there were solely intended to keep the natives in their place. It is notable that the two European campaigns in which the Red Army has participated during the post-war period have not been against Nato but against Hungary and Czechoslovakia, both Warsaw Pact members. Nor can it have escaped the Russians that the number of troops which the West wants them to withdraw in the first phase of an MBFR agreement almost precisely corresponds to the amount by which their level was increased by the garrison that was forced on the Czechs.

The West has long appreciated that the Red Army serves a dual function, but was startled to discover at Vienna that the Soviets apparently have a similar perception of US forces. Eastern interest at Vienna has not lain so much in securing the withdrawal of US troops, whom they regard as a stabilising force, but in setting ceilings on the armies of each European state, primarily in order to provide a check on West German revanchism of which the Russians retain a deep, visceral fear. It appears the Soviet vision of a perfect MBFR agreement is one which permits the super-powers to garrison Europe while all the natives disarm. The West, including Britain, has resisted with the utmost intransigence the concept of national ceilings – for an intriguing reason that would disturb most of the Labour movement were it better known. It would, they argue, inhibit the future development of a European Defence Community. Now, hands up all those who knew we were committed to any such thing?

It is difficult to be optimistic about a genuine agreement on reductions emerging from Vienna. That is not to deny that the discussions have been of value in providing a forum at which the two alliances can meet in an attempt to understand each other's fears, but it is surely time that we reconsidered whether arms control negotiations, which go to the heart of sensitive issues such as national security and sovereignty, are really the most likely vehicle for promoting détente. We might with advantage remember that the founders of the European Community first began by attempting a Defence Community, but abandoned the intractable task in order to concentrate on trade and economic issues where cooperation was more easily achieved and where agreement would make armed conflict less likely.

It is perhaps also worth recalling the answer which Castlereagh sent to Tsar Alexander's original proposal for a negotiated settlement of troop levels. He suggested that instead each country should unilaterally reduce its forces since 'the settlement for so many Powers under such difficult circumstances as to their relative means, frontiers, positions and faculties for rearming presents a very complicated question for negotiation: and in attempting such, difficulties are rather brought into view than made to disappear.' A century and a half later the talks at Vienna look perilously close to proving him right.

Christopher Hitchens

Liberté à la Polonaise

If the police in Poland ever feel the necessity to enter and search the home of a citizen, Polish law obliges them to have an impartial witness present while the weighty duty is discharged. A man in Warsaw who has been prominent in opposition circles for years told me that the most recent inspection of his books and papers had been fairly routine, but that he and the cops had haggled for almost an hour over who the impartial person should be. It is always nice to have a metaphor when attempting to describe a situation rather than an event, and in Poland at the moment the problem is very much one of who can hold the ring. The poet Miron Bialoszewski once wrote:

> The elect are few
> Everybody in the last resort
> Elects only himself.

Poland has a non-elected government and a self-appointed opposition. It is, as a matter of fact, the only Communist country with any permanent semi-public and quasi-legal opposition at all. The coexistence between the two may not last very long, but if it did it might spare the country one of the huge and violent lurches – 1956, 1968 or 1970 – by which it has managed to alter course since the war. As it is, the state dare not crush its critics and many Party officials would probably like to use them as a means of finding out what the population thinks. But nor can it really tolerate them, however scrupulously they keep their activities and petitions within the law. In addition to which, Gomulka made the mistake of forcing so many bright Poles into exile after 1968 that there is now a fairly flourishing network of international contacts and publications in existence, and the task of imposing silence would be a tough one.

Sitting in the same recently-searched flat with my new friend – his name is Jacek Kuron and he is an ex-Marxist dissident with a prison record for political activity – I learned a certain amount about the inches of leeway within which critical activity is carried on. At regular intervals his telephone would ring, and 'spontaneous' abuse would be anonymously delivered. There was a death threat, too, which had started at a countdown of 100 days and stood at 65 to go on the day I was there. This left him unmoved. He kept returning to the main subject of political conversation in Warsaw, which is the trial of workers involved in food-price riots last summer. These disturbances, in which Communist Party property and several stretches of railway line were severely damaged, led to the rescinding of the price rises, the deaths of some rioters and the imposition of a collective charge on all those known to have been involved in the protest. As a result, money has been collected, bulletins issued, lawyers approached and petitions launched. The latest and most ambitious plan is to lobby the *Sejm* – Poland's Parliament – for an inquiry into the conduct of the police and militia. All this has been going on, harassed certainly but not halted, for several months.

A feature of the abuse to which Kuron was subjected, and an index of the nervousness of the atmosphere (and the authorities) is anti-Semitism. Things are not as bad as they were in 1968 (when the 'cosmopolitan' origins of student leaders were sneered at in the newspapers). But they are nasty. One man who wrote an insulting letter to Kuron by registered mail sent another letter by hand saying that the anti-Semitic innuendoes in the first one had been dictated to him in a police station. Nobody to whom I told this story (unprovable by me at first hand though I saw the letters) seemed a bit surprised. It is, of course, an utterly deranged method of dealing with dissent; first because Kuron himself is *not* Jewish and second because much of the vulgar post-war anti-Semitism in Poland originates in the fact that so many of the Communist Party apparat *were*. For a Communist government to use, or tolerate the use of, a racial prejudice which has been used against itself is a kind of cynicism which suggests more than temporary unease.

Indeed, cynicism is a common currency. Although many of the Committee to Defend the Workers are ex-members of the Polish Socialist Party (and, interestingly, mention the fact in the short biographies they have produced), the general boredom with political rhetoric goes incredibly deep. True,

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the dissidents set great store by the support of Western Communist and Socialist parties. But they are careful to de-emphasise politics when approaching Polish public opinion. One girl who worked as a sympathiser of the Committee told me that she found herself believing things she knew not to be true or reasonable, just because the government media kept telling her the opposite. Kuron himself, whose prison sentence was largely incurred for a near-Trotskyist critique of the ruling party in the Sixties, said rather sadly that he did not feel the next wave of popular opposition would be very socialist in character because the very word had been brought into disrepute by the authorities.

The treatment of news, ideas and information is, indeed, revealingly bad. Bad, for the obvious reason that it is monotone and boring. Revealing, because any intelligent Pole can get the book or paper he requires, listen to the radio, or correspond with friends abroad. It takes a little effort and, in the case of Radio Free Europe, a little scepticism, but it can be done and the Government know it. Why, then, do they persist in acting as if they did not? It almost suggests that those in charge of propaganda do not care whether they are believed or not. One example. Everybody knew that the much hailed Corvalán release in exchange for Bukovsky was due to a deal and not to the trumpeted 'international solidarity'. Another example. The second shipyard strike at Stettin in 1971 was virtually provoked by workers reading in the Party paper that they had volunteered to work longer hours in the interest of production. How could the editor have imagined anybody believing him? There were promises of more press freedom at the start of the Gierek administration, but these have receded.

Sometimes the papers behave like an extension of the police force. Recently, visiting and domiciled Polish dissidents in London were called on by the Special Branch and asked if they intended any protest against the visit of Prime Minister Jaroszewicz. This is routine in the case of state visits, and probably ought not to be as much taken for granted as it is. The newspaper *Zycie Warszawy* reported on its front page that Adam Michnik and others had been held by the British police for anti-British activities, defining anti-British as anti-Polish and linking the two with the spirit of international cooperation. Michnik is quite well known in Poland as a historian and political activist. He proposes to return there soon. The falsity of the report will become obvious to all. It is hardly surprising that the Polish Government lacks sympathy and understanding among the intelligentsia.

It is quite impossible to gauge the likelihood of the upsurge that some people have gleefully or gloomily predicted. The only certain thing is that opposition has become markedly more bold at all levels, and police methods more jumpy. People are arrested and released again very quickly, as if minds were changing every minute. Interference with the distribution of the Committee communiqués is sporadic and random. The international telephone system is a great boom, and so is the internal one. Workers are prepared to go on strike, and to sign open petitions for the rehiring of sacked employees. Students are prepared to collect money and organise other forms of support and discussion. There is also the prestige of the Church, which publicly criticises the violations of human rights without falling into the trap of Cardinal Mindszenty's rabid reactionary line. Indeed, its record on anti-Semitism is better than that of many Western Catholic leaderships. (Again on the press, Cardinal Wyszynski made a strong statement on repression in his Christmas sermon, in a country not much less than 90-per-cent Catholic, and there was not a word of it reported).

When I spoke to Adam Michnik, he was guardedly optimistic. The long Spanish struggle for liberty had impressed him very much by its determination and its solidarity. He felt that there were ways of enlarging the area of pluralism in the here and now, but that there was always the possibility of an outright conflict with no real winners. As for socialism, he favoured it in spite of its discredit. 'After all, freedom and democracy are words that have been discredited by governments as well, but we do not abandon them. The real struggle for us is for citizens to cease being the property of the state.' There must be a fair number of Polish and Russian bureaucrats who wish they did not own this particular troublesome freehold.

Warsaw

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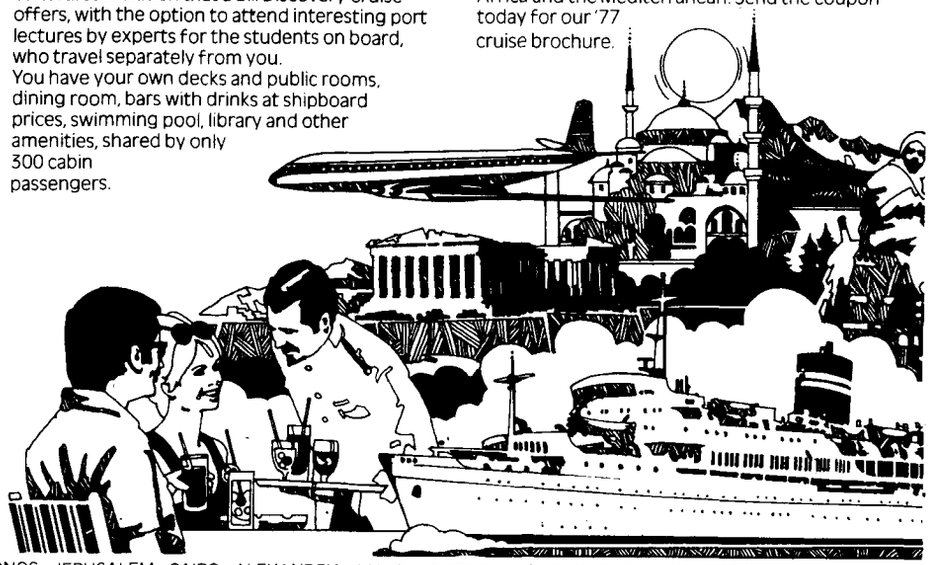

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Anne Bennett

Home Visitor

Met Mrs Norris, an old crone client of mine. 'Did you enjoy that OAP matinée?' I asked her. 'They wouldn't let me in,' she quavered. 'I couldn't produce my pension book.' She tottered off to buy her cigarettes and I went on to the office, where there was this fellow who looked a bit old for blue denims; he also looked fraught.

'It's like this,' he said. 'I run this group, well I'm lead singer too – we're not doing too bad, plenty of bookings. But it means I'm away a couple of weeks at a time and the wife, she's not too good – nervous breakdown. Our doctor and the psychiatrist say I ought to give up the group, get a local job. I could go into a factory, I suppose . . .' and his voice tailed away.

Oh Lord, I thought. Say he gave it up – and their next record was a hit. I could see him at the conveyor belt, he'd be like that fellow who left the Beatles just before they made it. And he'd become a milkman or something – oh the agony of it.

'No, no,' I cried, 'don't give it up. Do you think you're good?' 'First-rate,' he said. 'There you are then,' I told him. 'If your wife loves you she'll want you to be happy; and if she doesn't, then having you at home most of the time won't help her at all, will it? Might even make her worse. Oh, I do hope you do well' – and he was gone. So off I went to a man who wanted a home help.

No answer, but the woman next door thought he was at the doctor's. So I left a note saying: 'Will return at 2 p.m.'

'Miss Bennett, Social Services? You did say 2 p.m. – it's 2.15,' he said briskly, 'but never mind.'

'The traffic,' I muttered a bit feebly.

'It's perfectly all right. Do come in, take a seat. You'd like a cup of tea?'

There were two cups on a small table and some biscuits. 'Now,' he said settling himself into his chair, 'my application for a home help. I presume everything is satisfactory,' and it was as if *he* were interviewing *me*. I felt a bit lost.

'Well there are a few questions I . . .'

'Fire away,' he said.

'Payment,' I said cautiously. 'If you pay the full rate it's about 80p an hour.'

'Ah, now, I can't possibly pay that,' he said.

I felt a bit more in charge of the situation. 'That's all right,' I said. 'We can make an assessment and charge accordingly, but for that you will have to disclose your income.'

'There's no question of that.' He said it firmly.

'Oh dear, I'm sorry,' I said. 'Of course you should have had a letter really, explaining all this before I came.'

'Local government muddles,' he said condescendingly. 'Yes I know what it's like. I was a civil servant for 44 years until I retired. Yes, I loved my job, I could tell you a thing or two. Would you like another cup of tea?'

'Thank you,' I said letting my eyes flick over to the clock as if by accident. He was quick to notice.

'You have to go?'

'Oh no, no,' I said. He relaxed.

'Yes, I suppose I was what you'd call a "trouble-shooter" nowadays. I dealt with problems that came up among the staff in Whitehall. There was this particular supervisor. Always asked for me personally if she was puzzled. Had this young typist, clever little thing – kept making mistakes, though. I found out what it was: position of the lights. Poor girl couldn't see properly, didn't like to say so . . .'

Be kind, God. I thought. Don't make me want to yawn.

'. . . and if you'd like to see the photograph, it's upstairs. I'll get it. You'll have to bear with me. I'm a bit slow nowadays.'

By the time he'd regained his chair I had been thinking he wasn't going to make it. I hadn't realised asthma could be that bad.

'You can see why I don't go out if I can help it,' he said eventually. 'I'm so slow walking. Neighbours around here, they used to walk with me. Now I suppose they think "There's old Bill". They call from the other side of the road "Hullo Bill, can't stop, in a hurry". Expect I'd be the same. Afraid you'll think I'm rattling on a lot. Still it's nice to have someone to talk to. You get to start talking to yourself – as they say, it's the first sign. Do you know, until you came, I hadn't had a chat with anyone about the old days, not for weeks.'

'There are these day centres,' I said.

'Not my cup of tea,' he replied firmly.

'Look,' I said. 'Suppose I could find two or three people like yourself. Arrange transport here, you wouldn't have to go out. Do you play cards?'

'A hand at whist,' he said.

'There you are, then,' I said. 'Just the thing for the evening, you could give them a drink.' We were both quite carried away.

'Drop of sherry, glass of ale?' he asked. 'You think you could arrange it then?'

'I'm sure I could,' I said, rashly trying not to think of the transport problems and whom I could find, and would they get on okay, and, say, they came only the once – and would that be worse than not at all?

''Course I'm a true Thatcher man,' he said. 'Don't like asking favours, stand on your own two feet – that's my motto. Still, if you could arrange it, I'd be pleased.'

Eventually I left and he stood at his door till I was out of sight. I tried the volunteer centre. 'We'll do our best,' they said. I also mentioned him to the home help organiser.

'I know *him*,' she said. 'He's got no intention of having a home help at all. He just likes someone to go and see him. I went once – tells you all about his job doesn't he? Well, if he tries it again, I'm afraid all he'll get will be a letter on the mat.'

Mervyn Jones

Goodbye, Belhaven Street

In 1974 London Weekend Television decided to make a serial from my novel *Holding On*. The scene of this novel is a street of working-class houses in Canning Town, built at the time when the big Royal docks were opened. Charlie Wheelwright, my central character, is born in one of these houses in 1900; he sees part of the street destroyed by Hitler's bombs; he buys his house from the landlord and invests his savings in modernising it; and as an old man, though still convinced that it is in sound condition, he is forced to surrender it for demolition.

With Paul Knight, LWT's producer, I spent a day looking for a street suitable for location filming. No such street remained in Canning Town itself, which had been transformed into a no man's land of high-rise megaliths by the time I finished the novel. Hours of chasing round showed us that the London which hundreds of thousands of people still alive can vividly remember is as hard to find as Georgian London – you could almost say Tudor London. Paul eventually found just what he needed; it was Belhaven Street, in south Hackney.

A few houses were empty, which was also convenient because the actors could go in and out. The people of Belhaven Street explained the reason to me. 'They're going to knock the street down. We'll all have to go in a few years. Shame really – it's a nice street, we're all friends, we'd like to stay on. We've mostly spent money on the houses, putting in bathrooms and that, and anyway they're sound as a bell, they must have been really well built. But when they say you've got to go you can't argue, can you?'

Now, with the serial soon to come on the screen, I've been to Belhaven Street again. Practically all the houses there and in adjoining Burnside Street have been cleared of human life. The familiar, cold sheets of corrugated metal cover the windows. Just a few people, without neighbours and living in an uncanny silence, are holding on. They haven't got long now.

No comment I might make could be as cogent as a letter in the *Sunday Times* of 29 August 1976 from Mr Richard Balfe, chairman of the GLC's Housing Development Committee. He wrote:

> The nation's social and economic ills will not be solved by gobbling up the countryside and encouraging the urban sprawl. All the metropolitan authorities recognise this now and have turned their attention to the root of the problem – our decaying inner city areas.

For the GLC, he went on, 'this means a forthright stress on revitalising the housing stock'. And the aim of the Strategic Housing Plan, he explained, is 'to double the amount of rehabilitation in London and thus remove the emphasis on new building'.

Strategic plans, of course, are born every

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few years but never altogether die. The fate of Belhaven Street has its origins in the London plan drawn up by Sir Patrick Abercrombie in 1943. This made provision for a wedge of recreational open space reaching from Hackney's Victoria Park almost to the Thames. Working during the war, Abercrombie of course hadn't the resources to find out just which of the unbombed houses covered by his wedge were in good condition. (Belhaven Street and Burnside Street weren't bombed, which is why they survived as a community.) I suppose he also made the assumption – shared by Ministers of Housing, including Aneurin Bevan and Harold Macmillan – that a few years of vigorous effort could dispose of the housing shortage. But the shortage is very much with us today, a point rightly and emphatically made by Mr Balfe in his letter. Anyway, people in Belhaven Street in 1974 said decidedly that their neighbourhood didn't need a new park, certainly not on the ruins of their houses.

Ms Joyce Bellamy, who is working on the project for the GLC, told me that it's 'part of the overall scheme for urban renewal'. These overall schemes, one sees, are well able to survive new doctrines and ministerial circulars. 'It is still largely fragmented,' she said' 'but coalescence is increasing.' She added that the 'overall standard' of the old houses in the path of the Park Complex is low. Individual houses might be sound, but 'it is impracticable to leave free-standing properties'. I wish I'd heard this phrase before I wrote the dialogue between the planning official and Charlie Wheelwright.

In Belhaven Street, another department of the GLC informed me, all the houses were classed as sub-standard. How sub-standard, I asked? 'Not fit for habitation.' The compulsory purchase, therefore, proceeded under a Slum Clearance Order. Yet when I last saw the street in what I suppose I should call a habitation situation, all the people with whom I chatted during filming breaks said that they were well content with their houses, and asked nothing more than to go on living in these houses so long as they were allowed.

On my recent visit I found curtains still in the windows of No 24, an interruption to a long row of metal sheets. Mr Bayly came to the door and told me that he'd bought the house 18 years ago. Even then it was known that the street was ultimately doomed, so he has never put any money into his house beyond the costs of everyday maintenance. But no work was ever needed, he pointed out; the house is entirely satisfactory, without the least sign of damp or subsidence.

Like everybody else, Mr and Mrs Bayly will be sad to leave. 'Worse for some, though,' Mr Bayly said. 'There were two brothers round the corner in Burnside Street, they'd been there for 62 years. Now they've been sent out to Chingford. Don't know anybody there, of course, why should they?'

'Soon there would be nothing left,' I made Charlie Wheelwright reflect at the end of my novel. 'Probably there were no photographs of the street as it had been at its peak of life; no one had thought then of placing on record what was natural, part of the scenery.' At least Belhaven Street will remain on record. On video-tape.

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Jeremy Bray

Escaping from the IMF Straitjacket

Public expenditure cuts are a distressing business. I ask myself in my own constituency, where we have a fine new day centre for the mentally handicapped, in heaven's name why should those poor kids now have to be sent home after a 3½-day week to be bored, miserable and frustrated on their own? That is what cutting current government expenditure means in practice. So the IMF conditions need the most searching scrutiny.

When it became clear in August that we were in for a rough ride on the pound, and Jimmy Carter had safely picked up the Democratic nomination, I wrote to Professor Lawrence Klein, who was his chief economic adviser during the campaign, and who will remain a close consultant to the new US President and his Administration. I have known Klein for years because of our common interests in economic research and policy optimisation (NS 29 October 1976). I asked him if he would see someone from the UK. He replied asking me over straight after the presidential election without waiting for government protocol. I spent the Saturday after the poll with him at the Wharton School in Philadelphia, and also visited IMF headquarters in Washington while their mission was in London. It was a private visit, but I made sure the Chancellor was fully informed, and I was accompanied by a very bright and helpful First Secretary from our Embassy in Washington, who reported independently to the Treasury. I had further talks with Klein in London on 27 November when he also saw the Chancellor and Treasury officials.

The IMF straitjacket in which we have been trussed up has not been fully explained by the Chancellor or the Treasury in all its brutal simplicity. Nor does the Treasury see much hope of escaping from the straitjacket in the next three years. Yet escape we can by sufficient ingenuity and determination. And escape we must, not only for our own sake, but for the sake of other nations trussed up in a worse plight than we are.

The conditions imposed by the IMF in the Letter of Intent seek to keep the rate of growth of Gross Domestic Product below the rate of growth of potential up to 1979, so unemployment will not fall before 1980. For the next year a growth of money GDP of 17 per cent is matched against a restriction of growth of the money supply to 11 per cent, implying a tight squeeze on credit. It is a miserable prospect. The two paragraphs on monetary conditions in the 1967 Letter of Intent have multiplied to 15 paragraphs in the 1976 letter, with each one tightening the straps on the monetary straitjacket.

The Treasury has not explained how the IMF team works on a loan like this. They ask the Treasury to produce its own forecast, which it does with the aid of its own comprehensive and moderately sophisticated macro-economic model. The IMF then lop forecast GDP until the deficit on the balance of payments matches the loan available. That is fair enough. But then they note the implied domestic credit expansion, and lay down the strictest observance of that as the condition for a loan.

Domestic credit expansion or DCE is an instrument invented by the IMF for restraining delinquent economies, and is virtually unknown to economics in any other context. It is roughly the sum of money supply (cash and bank deposits) and the deficit on the balance of payments. The effect of requiring DCE to follow a prescribed path is that if the balance of payments does not improve month by month as expected, the money supply has to be reduced by a corresponding amount. And this has to be done by raising interest rates, restricting credit, cutting public expenditure, or increasing taxes. The IMF claims it works.

In doing so the IMF are working not by the Treasury model, but by their own Polak model. There is nothing secret about it. It is described in the IMF Staff Papers of November 1957 and April 1960. Mr Polak, who is a director of the IMF and has been head of the Research Department for almost 20 years, told me during the loan negotiations when I visited him in Washington that this remains the basis of IMF operations, and other IMF staff confirmed this. The Polak model gives no explicit consideration to consumption, saving, investment, interest rates, prices, nor – believe it or not – even to the exchange rate and public expenditure. In economists' jargon it is the crudest possible quantity theory of money, fixed exchange rate model of an open economy. It deals simply with national income, money supply, domestic credit expansion, exports, imports, and foreign exchange reserves. Apart from definitions it makes only two assumptions on behaviour: a constant velocity of circulation of money, and a constant ratio of imports to national income.

Just how poor is the evidence on which Polak based his model can be gauged from the data in his original paper. The so-called 'constant' velocity of circulation of money, or rather its reciprocal, the ratio of money supply to money GDP in the UK in the five years 1950-1954, was .50, .46, .43, .41, and .40, and the 'constant' ratio of imports to GDP was .25, .33, .28, .25 and .24. Treasury forecasts are often criticised for their errors, but on this evidence the errors of the Polak model are something like three times as large.

IMF staff are not blind to the crudity of the Polak model, but they claim – and in particular Mr Polak claims – it works. One merit in the eyes of the IMF is that it uses only the information available from the most rudimentary of central banks in the most underdeveloped of countries. The IMF has used it in hundreds of cases over more than 20 years, including now twice on Britain. But no doubt Procrustes noted a remarkable uniformity in the height of his guests after a night on his bed.

To see the effect of Polak's model – perhaps more appropriately spelt the Pole-Axe model – it can be likened to the theory of a doctor who, noting that illness tended to be correlated with a rise in temperature, popped his patients into the refrigerator when their temperature rose, and into the oven when it fell. The treatment worked remarkably well in that any patient who was not cured pretty quickly soon reached the desired temperature, albeit dead. Economies, though, do not die: they simply fade away.

The Polak model provides a simple goad to keep the offending debtor nation on what the IMF believes to be a straight and narrow path. For underdeveloped countries the Polak model provides both path and goad – both forecast and control instrument. For a country such as Britain, it provides the control instrument alone. All would be well if economies were things that walked along paths. But they are not. In their vagaries of behaviour they are more like the rolling English drunkard making the rolling English road. They are organic, not shapeless; they do have regularities of behaviour, but they are not precise, and their behaviour is constantly evolving. They do respond to policy, but what matters overwhelmingly is the sensitive design of policy, as a good shepherd and his dog can take a flock of sheep over the fells. But when there is such a very floppy relationship between instrument and effect as there is in the Polak model, and when that instrument is used as if it were an iron law, it is asking for trouble. In what is the largest scale application of the Polak model to date, the British economy could very well be pole-axed by the IMF conditions during the next three years.

If IMF practice and argument is so awful, why has it not been exposed years ago? First, the IMF is a bit of a backwater for economists from creditor nations to whom it is the resort of failed economies, and economists from debtor nations are easily suspect of special pleading. While Treasury economists squirmed under the crudity of the DCE requirements, nevertheless over the past ten years Britain has always objected when unfortunate countries like Chad or Zaire have transgressed their DCE limits. To their shame the UK Treasury offered no alternative to other nations. Second, the IMF does not exactly seek publicity. Jour-

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nalists are not welcome, and I was only admitted at the request of the British Government, and because my own work was known to younger members of the IMF staff. And, third, Mr Polak is not stupid. He is of Hungarian origin, with all the strength of views of the Hungarian economists better known in Britain, but with vastly superior bureaucratic style. He has been the dominant influence on IMF methods for nearly 20 years. He acknowledges the crudity of his model, and sets ambitious requirements for a substitute theory, which has the effect of avoiding accusations of crudity and preventing the emergency of practical alternatives. He allowed Mr Rhomberg, a more modern-minded economist in his department, to foster model developments, and the linkage of national models, but on a scale that could not produce a pay-off, and eventually moved Mr Rhomberg into a consultant role. In recent years IMF staff seem to have thought it better to bide their time, waiting for Mr Polak's now imminent retirement. Mr Polak has been a conscientious and distinguished international civil servant, but it is time the world moved on.

Balanced Objectives

However, perhaps the most important reason is that the design of policy for debtor countries is not a simple matter. It has to be built up from the accumulation of month-to-month practical decisions, yet there must be some underlying rationale which gives some assurance of equitable treatment to member countries, and gives reasonable confidence of success.

IMF practice does allow choice in the path to be followed, and in the methods for planning the path. And some instrument is needed to keep the economy moving in the desired direction. But the goad of the Polak model is the wrong instrument.

A better approach is for the debtor country to decide its domestic fiscal and monetary policies, and to declare to the IMF those policies and the trade-offs it was making and would continue to make between a limited number of objectives in implementing those policies. In the case of Britain, where the imbalance lies not only in the balance of payments, the objectives might include the balance of payments, the public sector borrowing requirement, money supply, investment in manufacturing industry, the retail price index, GDP growth, and unemployment. In pursuing these objectives, Britain would use its full range of fiscal and monetary policy instruments, and the IMF would monitor policies to make sure we stuck to our declared priorities.

While the Polak model uses one instrument (the money supply), to pursue one objective (the balance of payments), this alternative strategy uses all available instruments to pursue a balanced set of objectives. *The Polak model will be deemed a success if it leaves Britain in 1979 with a positive balance of payments, zero investment, high inflation, high unemployment and a stagnant economy. This alternative strategy will be deemed a success only when the economy is genuinely restored to health.*

To use many instruments to pursue balanced priorities in an uncertain environment is a problem which has attracted much research in recent years, and practical methods have been developed. It calls for the application of control theory methods in economics, a field given the generic title policy optimisation' (NS 29 October 1976).

Policy optimisation is not a familiar concept to the IMF. While I was in Washington during the IMF loan negotiations I discussed a memorandum I wrote on a longer term support operation for the pound with Mr Polak, and it was clear that Mr Polak had not read the modern literature on policy optimisation. Nor have any members of the IMF staff done any substantial work in the field. To shoot down my proposals, Mr Polak merely said no creditor country would accept a liability contingent on movements in the exchange rate – a judgment on which the Bank for International Settlements' agreement on the funding of official sterling holdings has effectively proved him wrong. If IMF staff do not get down to serious work in this field, the interesting work will be done where it is now going on, in the Federal Reserve Board, the Wharton School, and elsewhere in the US and Europe, with the IMF become a mere cypher.

The IMF may be doing the wrong sums, but the problems about the British economy are real enough. They include a weak balance of payments, lack of growth, unemployment, inflation, excessive public sector borrowing, inadequate investment and an unpredictable exchange rate still threatened by the overhang of overseas holdings of sterling and the role of sterling in world trade. The problems are inter-related, and to solve one at the expense of others is no solution.

Let us start with the pound. The Chancellor may not be a monetarist, but if the City and Wall Street believe the pound will fall if money supply rises, what alternative has the Chancellor but to talk monetarist language and squeeze the money supply? However there is a new factor in the situation: the new President and Congress in the United States. Jimmy Carter won the American election with a commitment to reduce unemployment. He believes you do not fight inflation and deficits by increasing unemployment. That was no empty political slogan. It was as carefully worked out as any economic policy can be. And what is true for America is true for others.

Carter's Counsel

Carter's economics and his economists are neither monetarist nor anti-monetarist. He picks high grade advisers. His prospective Under-Secretary for Economic Affairs in the State Department, Professor Richard Cooper of Yale, wrote the latest survey of monetary economics in the *American Economic Review* in May 1975. He says of simple Keynesian and monetarist models of the Friedman, let alone the Polak type,

> These models cannot compete successfully with the more complicated models. Today most economists would probably agree there simply is not much empirical content in their approach . . . Economists will want to know how specific components of demand are connected to money markets and the accuracy of predictions about the behaviour of the links in that chain.

No one in Britain who has learned that the price of houses depends on the availability of mortgages could crib about that. But monetary instruments alone do not determine the course of the economy, and monetary targets can be reached without the economy reaching a tolerable or sustainable state. It would therefore be wrong policy for the US, politically and economically, to express conditions for the support of the pound solely in terms of UK monetary targets.

William Simon, the present US Secretary to the Treasury, and the IMF believe the market will look after exchange rates, but Cooper writes (*Economist* 18 December 1976):

> Governments will and should intervene to influence exchange rates . . . Private speculators cannot be expected always to smooth exchange rate movements adequately, and governments can help to form expectations if they intervene to smooth exchange rates and to brake rapid movements. The IMF role is to make sure that the intervention is not at the expense of other countries, or inconsistent with the action of other countries. Working out a *modus operandi* for exchange rate management will be the major task of the next few years in the international monetary domain.

The design of a support operation for the pound on the lines I have indicated would be one of those developments by which this task is likely to be accomplished.

Klein knows the British economy well through his direction of LINK, the IMF-financed project which brings together national economy models of major industrial nations. In discussing our problems, Klein asked me the question: 'If you have American support for the pound, what could you do about productivity and investment in industry?' It is a very good question, and it is now up to the British government to see if it has any answers. For it is clear that the IMF loan is not enough. The

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pound will need further support in the coming months and this support will have to be an operation in which the new US Administration will play a leading role. US support will be conditional on evidence of an improvement in our underlying economic performance – that is, in productivity and investment.

Some investment is generated by the growth of GDP and the pressure of demand. Klein made it clear his question refers to investment over and above that level. Such spontaneous investment is not sufficient to make up for lost time, to reach a healthily sustainable level, and to reduce unemployment in the shorter term. Our experience of broad-brush investment incentives in the UK has not been very encouraging. Bearing in mind that we cannot have a consumer or public expenditure boom to set investment going, it would be difficult to produce hard evidence of the kind that would convince the Americans that we could jack up investment incentives as the CBI suggests to a high enough level to meet the need. By contrast to both Keynesianism and monetarism, which are primarily demand side theories, the Americans will want to see us put forward a supply side economic policy, or to translate that into British political language, an industrial policy.

Klein's Own Exercise

An example of how to build such a policy is Klein's own Wharton conference exercise. By contrast with the British National Plan, the Treasury forecast, and the present abortive approach to planning agreements, it brings together industrial policy with the apparatus of demand management. The Wharton School mails out to subscribing companies and agencies, who produce or handle over half of the US GNP, forecasts on alternative assumptions from its quarterly and annual models, down to industry level detail. At the quarterly conference, Sears Roebuck give their reaction and latest figures on consumer sales, General Motors on autos, Bethlehem Steel on steel, the banks on credit, and so on, right through the economy, all with reference to the alternative scenarios: government agencies are there participating on equal terms. After the conference revised forecasts are mailed out, maintaining the continuous flow of information which is integrated into the companies' decisions and the public policy-making process. It speeds up the response to investment opportunities, and of marketing and production plans to changes in the market: it generally tightens up the quality of decisions.

This was the system I had in mind when I introduced Schedule 5 into the Industry Act 1975, requiring the Treasury to publish forecasts and give access to its economic model. The forecast published by the Treasury with the IMF Letter of Intent claimed to meet the requirements of this Schedule. In fact it was rather like the Hoffnung arrangement for recorder and pop guns of the *1812 Overture*. It could just as well have been produced by a wet finger as by the Treasury model. We must have the Tchaikovsky score, with full brass and cannon. I know the Treasury is so punch drunk that some thought the skies would fall if it published a forecast at all. So I am not planning to bring out the heavy hand of the law and of ministerial and official commitments on this occasion. But next time we must have the full model forecasts.

Forces to Come

The interface and reactions within companies also need to be considered. There will be three major forces let loose within companies in Britain this year. The first is a return to more flexible company and plant level collective bargaining, the second is the introduction of inflation accounting, which will reveal the inadequate levels of renewal in British industry, and the third is the introduction of industrial democracy, not only with worker elected members of company boards, but with increased trade union influence throughout companies in all aspects of their operations.

Left to themselves these forces could cause much disruption, but used constructively, they could provide the dynamic we so badly need within the enterprise. To harness these forces and relate them to their economic environment, companies will need a model of their own activities, which they can link to the Treasury model. The Government should produce a demonstration set of models, one for each of four or five different types of manufacturing company. For those companies who do not have or could not produce models on their own, the business schools and specialised management consultancies could undertake the complete production of company models, or consulting for in-house model builders, or the provision of support, such as software, manuals, and training courses.

Each company model should be useable in collective bargaining, with or without national guidelines. It should give worker representatives on company boards an appreciation of the structure and performance of their companies. It should demonstrate the effects of adopting inflation accounting. It should demonstrate the effects of possible changes in fiscal and monetary conditions, whether flowing from government policy or the market. It should demonstrate any effect of national economy model variables on company prospects. It should accommodate descriptions of the possibilities and consequences of improved productivity of capital assets and labour, the opening up or closing down of particular activities, and the impact on employment in the localities where the company operates.

Reservations in Whitehall

The actual models would be built with the agreement and cooperation of companies and trade unions. They would be accessible to government for the appraisal of national policies, with any such runs known to, or provided by, the companies concerned. The whole operation would be entirely voluntary – but with the understanding that from outside Britain support for the pound depended on this initial gearing up of management practice and on the subsequent improvement of performance. From within Britain productivity pay rises would have to be justified and monitored with reference to such model demonstration, or by equivalent arguments.

The US will use the same approach to international economic questions. The business of the economic summit will be, for the immediate future, to seek agreement on reflating the stronger economies, and strengthening the weaker ones; and for the longer term, to set up the apparatus for tackling the underlying monetary, trade and commodities problems in world development. Again it will be a matter of inter-linking national economy, monetary, trade and commodity models, testing them and working out policies upon them.

This is Jimmy Carter's own approach, not just that of his advisers. In his autobiography, *Why Not The Best?*, he tells how much he was impressed by Helmut Schmidt's energy model. During the campaign he set Klein's team at the Wharton School on to building an energy model for US policy making. Klein has been arranging bilateral conferences between the United States and other countries on national economy models. The Ford Foundation under the stimulus of Carter's economists, and particularly Gerry Adams, is arranging a conference on the design of commodity stabilisation schemes. Michael Blumenthal, the new US Secretary to the Treasury, is an industrialist experienced in international trade negotiations, and a Princeton Ph.D. in international economics.

By taking our own intiatives in Britain, we would be learning that in the world we have created for ourselves, unless we use sensible tools intelligently towards human ends, we shall have crude tools like the Polak model used brutishly towards mechanical ends. While I would guess that most of the cabinet, let alone most Members of Parliament, have never even heard of the Polak model, the proposal I have put is that the real workings of each company should be open to its workers, just as we are in the process of opening up the Treasury model.

The New Marshall Aid

These developments require no techniques or skills which are not already widespread in Britain. But they do require a major initiative and a new coherence of strategy from the government, starting in the Treasury. The opening offered by the new US administration could be as important as Marshall's speech at Harvard in 1947, and the response from the British Government needs to be at least as vigorous as Ernest Bevin's response in grasping what seemed to him 'like a lifeline to sinking men' and turning it into Marshall Aid. But because the language and the response needed is so different, I am not sure the message has registered with the Treasury, and nor was Klein after talking to the Chancellor and Treasury officials. I hope the Parliamentary Labour Party will see sufficient of the issues for both Left and Right to demand this change of strategy, and an escape from so crude an IMF straitjacket. We owe it not only to our constituents, but also to other nations who have to escape from far worse straits than our own.

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Peter Wilby

English in the Classroom

Two years ago, the Bullock Report on English teaching was published, in the wake of alleged public concern about children's reading standards. It was a solid job of work, like its chairman's biography of Ernest Bevin. There were no glamorous proposals, no revelations of foolproof teaching methods, no blueprints for spectacular new projects. Parliament did not bother to debate it, the press reported that it had said nothing, the Stationery Office produced such an inadequate first print that some schools did not have a sight of it for months, and many teachers blandly assumed that they were already doing everything it recommended.

The Department of Education and Science didn't exactly blaze a trail. In a dusty foreword, Reg Prentice, then Education Secretary, observed that the Government had no money to implement the recommendations and that, in any case, most of them concerned other people. So far the DES is acting on only one of three major recommendations that concerned it – for the establishment of a national system for monitoring reading and writing standards – and even that will be implemented at least two years after the deadline set by Bullock.

The committee did not mention the idea of a common core curriculum – it was scarcely recognised as a legitimate area of public debate until last summer – yet the response to its report highlights the need. One of Bullock's firmest observations was that language development ought not to be confined to English lessons. It should concern every teacher, and schools should develop a 'language across the curriculum' policy. How many local authorities, asked *The Times Educational Supplement* a year later, had tried to ensure that all their schools were working on such a policy? Only 43 out of the 96 authorities that replied to the survey. And many of the others remarked that they could not legally dictate policy to the schools. This is precisely the difficulty with Bullock: 20 representatives of the great and the good spend 18 months' hard labour and nearly £100,000 of public money on producing 333 conclusions and recommendations. Yet who is supposed to implement them, oversee them, evaluate them, report back on them?

Bullock's main value, perhaps, was that he gave the seal of respectability to a movement that was already gathering strength. The latest survey by the National Foundation for Educational Research, though still incomplete, suggests a significant improvement in 11-year-olds' reading standards since its 1970 survey, the one that started all the trouble. The Inner London Education Authority, in its 1973 literacy survey, found a similar improvement compared with 1968 and 1971. The same trend is reported from the United States, where the decline in reading standards among 13-year-olds and 17-year-olds has been halted since 1971, while 9-year-olds, and particularly black 9-year-olds, have improved dramatically. On both sides of the Atlantic, the English language is being rehabilitated. Quite simply, the schools are giving it more time, resources and attention. It hardly matters that some of the Bullock seminars, conferences, courses and weekends have been opportunities for the complacent exchange of platitudes. They have brought language back into the forefront of teachers' thinking.

There was a preposterous notion around a few years ago that teaching working-class children to read would leave their minds defenceless against bourgeois propaganda. Very few, if any, teachers subscribed to that, but there was (and, to some extent, still is) a danger that English teaching would be buried under the fashions of 'integration' and 'relevance'. The ideas behind these movements were that artificial subject divisions (English, history, religious studies, and so on) ought to be avoided and that, wherever possible, learning should be related to contemporary phenomena with which children could identify. So, instead of starting history with the Romans, religion with the Creation, biology with the amoeba and English with the noun, the child has to ask 'where did I come from?' and, with luck, he will hare off on a Cook's tour of the curriculum, with the Romans, the Creation, the amoeba and the noun representing overnight stopping-points. Where it works, it works well; but, too often, it never gets beyond an insipid version of social studies. Apart from the obvious point that it is no use producing a nation of socially-conscious illiterates, specialist inspectors say that even brighter children, in this sort of curriculum, are seeking and re-ordering information, without developing their language skills.

The argument isn't against the integrated curriculum itself; only against the assumption that reading and writing skills can be developed without anyone paying special attention to them. This was the point of Bullock's 'language across the curriculum'. Children need not just the literary and imaginative language common to English lessons, they also need scientific language, technical language, historical language. Who looks after those uses of English? The specialist subject teachers or the English teachers? It doesn't greatly matter, as long as someone does. What the schools are now realising is that, without a systematic approach to language, from five to 16, the whole complicated edifice of education comes tumbling down.

The glorious anarchy of English schooling is the obstacle to such an approach. How many teachers nowadays want to bother with anything as boring and untrendy as a handwriting lesson? (Actually, the miracle is how many do.) It's not so much that children ought to go back to writing in neat straight lines; it's just that, if they can't join their letters up properly, it takes them three or four times as long to write anything and secondary school specialists are getting fed up with it. If the integrated curriculum is to remain the fashion, someone, somewhere has to slip letter formation into the project on old age.

The danger (and it becomes obvious when you get on to a subject, like handwriting, that creates irrational emotions) is that the 'back to basics' movement will swing too far. The trouble with the old-fashioned methods, which most people who went to school pre-war probably experienced, was that they concentrated on reading, grammar and spelling that were placed in no context at all. Children were drilled in the rules of language but taught nothing about its use.

Their work neither started from anything interesting nor led to anything interesting. 'I sprang to the stirrup.' 'Yet there is time!' 'Read the next stanza, Smith.' 'At Aershot, up leapt of a sudden the sun.' Even Rhodes Boyson might prefer projects on old age to a scavenger's raid on Browning's poetry.

Any wise professional is prepared to accept a compromise and many teachers (probably most) do. The traditionalists and the progressives must share the blame for the widespread adoption of entrenched positions on the extremes. Most schools are small, inward-looking, rather neurotic institutions, in which the need to feel part of one professional camp or another is powerful. Seating arrangements in many staffrooms are based on an invisible frontier between traditional and progressive territory.

The best thing about the Bullock Report was that it did not try to destroy any of the most cherished assumptions on either side. Its main achievement was to beckon people gently back to the middle ground. The question now is whether we need a common core curriculum to keep them there.

This is the first of a series of articles by Peter Wilby on the teaching of the major subjects in British schools.

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London Diary

☐ The life of the Annan Committee on Broadcasting is, I hear, moving peacefully – or perhaps not so peacefully – towards its close. There is apparently no likelihood of a unanimous report being produced, at least so far as the future of the BBC is concerned. On that the Committee is said to be split pretty well down the middle – with those who wish to preserve the BBC in its present form enjoying only the most parlous of majorities. Not that ITV has had everything its own way either. It's by no means assured of getting its long-coveted fourth channel, since those who support the idea of the channel being given to an access-minded national television foundation are still fighting a spirited rearguard action. In fact it looks as if all the most prickly questions will eventually land straight back in the Government's lap – which prompts, at least in my mind, a doubt about the whole purpose of these blue-riband committees. The Annan Committee, after a false start in 1970, was appointed in the summer of 1974 and it has now deliberated for two and a half years. Presumably there will be a parliamentary debate once its report is published in April and thereafter, perhaps towards the end of the summer, a government White Paper. Then in November we can look forward to getting a Bill to be debated during the 1977/8 parliamentary session. By 1979, with luck, any necessary alterations in the structure and organisation of British broadcasting will finally have taken effect. Doesn't that perhaps tell us something about how slow the pace of change – and how hard the path of the reformer – will always be in Britain?

☐ Distant tribal drums have started to sound in the past week or so in protest against the fact that for 12 years and more no hereditary peerages have been created in Britain. I never thought it was a change to which the Tory Party would be easily reconciled – indeed it's not so long since the last genuine blood-line Tory to be Prime Minister (Alec Douglas-Home) was actually promoting a colleague (David Eccles) from being a common or garden Baron to being a much grander Viscount. Greater faith in the system could no man have than that. But Ted Heath, to his credit, had no use for the hereditary principle with all the gradations that it implies – and in the three and a half years that he was Prime Minister loyally followed the 'life peerage only' practice that Wilson had established. What will Mrs Thatcher do if she becomes Prime Minister? You know what I think? She will be delighted to follow Sir Alec and to repudiate Mr Heath.

☐ It was good to see a Labour MP, John Lee, taking on Michael Foot over India. I say that, because with Bernard Levin on one side and Michael Foot on the other there's an obvious danger that views on Mrs Gandhi could come to look like a Right/Left divide. That is certainly not the case – in fact I was not surprised to hear that Michael Foot, after his outburst to the India League last week, is now the toast of the latest school of appeasement within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In any event the footsteps he continues to trudge along in were never particularly liberal or even enlightened ones. I've just been looking up a letter that appeared in *The Times* last June. Headed 'India Under Mrs Gandhi' it spoke of that country 'desperately needing the smack of firm government', of Mrs Gandhi having 'provided it perhaps in the nick of time' – and then went on, just like Mr Foot, to speak a few weasel words about civil liberties before roundly declaring 'the gains of the last year quite massively outweigh the losses'. The letter was written by Eldon Griffiths, the hard-line Tory MP for Bury St Edmunds – who at least can claim consistency in his general lack of sympathy for libertarian causes.

☐ Before we all get too self-righteous over the French action in letting Abu Daoud – the alleged organiser of the Munich Olympic Games massacre – fly back unscathed (and first-class) to Algeria, it's probably worth recalling that it's not so long since our own Government did much the same thing. In September 1970 there was a great deal of huffing-and-puffing from Downing Street before the acknowledged PLO skyjacker, Leila Khaled, was quietly released from Heathrow and allowed to return whence she came. The truth, of course, is that in the matter of terrorism all concessions are cumulative – something that the Israelis at least have always understood. But meanwhile I hope that no one will try to tell me again that Paris is 'the most civilised capital in Europe'. So far as standing up to uncivilised aggression is concerned, it has – and not for the first time – staked its claim to be the greatest push-over in the business.

☐ What a mess the Labour Party has got itself into over its appointment of Andy Bevan as its national youth officer. To declare now that in future all such appointments will be advertised internally before being thrown open to outsiders only serves to demonstrate how far the Labour Party's own practice in the past has departed from the principles urged by unions elsewhere. No doubt we shall shortly see the National Association for Freedom riding to the rescue of the 'victimised' Mr Bevan – which at least will provide a diverting vision. But it won't solve the Labour Party's own dilemma, for which the NEC must take full responsibility. Everything else apart, it was an odd decision in the first place for it to appoint one of its own sub-committee members to a paid staff job in Transport House. The last time that kind of thing happened was when Harry Nicholas was made general secretary in 1968 – and I wouldn't have said he was exactly a shining advertisement for 'jobs for the boys'.

☐ The arrival of Vladimir Bukovsky in this country, and the restrained but emphatic way in which he has made his points about the political system in the USSR, have eclipsed two major arguments which need restating. One, which I confess to having agreed with at first sight, is the *de facto* Russian recognition of Chile and the implied support this gives to the 'Scoop' Jackson view of 'that's the stuff to give the Reds'. The second, and in the long run likely to be the more important, is the usefulness of Corvalán to the Russians. He, and his party, have tremendous prestige on the international Left. They have endured persecution and terror of a high order, which is more than Marchais or Berlinguer can claim. They also agree with anything the USSR cares to do or say. What better foil against Euro-Communism? I predict that Luis Corvalán will adorn many forthcoming Festivals of Peace and International Friendship with the message that tyranny is good for you. What could be more ironic than that?

☐ 'Sleeping policemen' was not a phrase I'd met before; but I've recently got to know it because just near where I live nine hefty humps have recently been built on to an ordinary 30 m.p.h. thoroughfare (and that's apparently what these humps are officially called). Their object, of course, is to slow down the rate of driving (even if the result has been perceptibly to increase the level of traffic noise). But is there, I wonder, some darker plot afoot in the Road Transport Laboratory? For not content with forcing cars to go slower, someone also seems determined to make pedestrians go faster. For years we had outside this office an ordinary zebra crossing, which used to work reasonably well at least for those with a strong cast of mind and no inclination to be bullied by motorists. We now, however, have a crossing regulated by a pair of ominously bleeping traffic lights which give you just eight seconds to scamper across the road in safety. Up come the Pipes of Pan – and we all run for our lives. I suppose it's all progress of a kind – of the kind that will shortly lead us to the battery farm.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ After an outcry from local birdlovers and Yorkshiremen, Henley Council, Oxon, has dropped a proposal to round up pigeons that perch on the town hall and deport them to Yorkshire. – *Daily Telegraph* (Mrs K. Auty)

☐ Let us be frank. The low-paid are low paid because they tend to lack skill and intelligence. The idea, which underlines much Socialist rhetoric, that the able, high-earning people should make sacrifices for the privilege of keeping alive the mediocre majority is grotesquely immoral. – *Daily Express* (Judith Cook)

☐ After a conventional education, including a spell as page to King George V and Queen Mary, Sir John Colville entered the Foreign Office. – Review by Julian Amery in the *Listener*

☐ Sex education gives encouragement to those insidious forces in society such as abortion, single families and nursery schools which wish to destroy the family and bring about a Communist state. – Letter in *Eastern Evening News* (G. Crompton)

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University Forum

Robert Silver*

No Backs to the Front

The one thing the National Front hate most is to be laughed at. Intense opposition makes its members feel important; bitter attack generates a gratifying sensation of persecution. But humour reduces their pretensions to the same level of innocuous pomposity that we are accustomed to associate with the targets of the front cover of *Private Eye*. I hope that Mr Martin Webster – national activities organiser of the party – will not take it amiss if I poke some gentle fun.

His stomach falling out of his trousers, his hands permanently in front of his crotch – the nearest they ever get to the corridors of power – he represents an awesome spectacle. I recently had an amusing encounter with him during the Cambridge by-election. The National Front held a public meeting in support of their local candidate, Mr Jeremy Wotherspoon, an estate agent. We were promised a question-time when the speeches – by Tyndall, Webster etc. – had finished. However, just as it was about to begin, a steward at the back came in to announce that the police had requested an immediate termination of the proceedings, because of the threat to the peace from the student demonstration outside. We later found out that the police had made no such request. I went up to Mr Webster at the back of the hall and asked him, in view of his proposals for law and order, what precisely were the facts of his own criminal record.

He was clearly put out. He replied with a series of expletives that seemed to indicate that I was a communist and an alien. He threatened me with immediate expulsion from this country as soon as his party had attained power. On my insistence that he answer the question, he conceded that he had been imprisoned for six months for an attempted assault on President Kenyatta, on a visit to England. He then returned to his original theme and by his remarks made the implied and correct observation that I was Jewish. On my protest that for three generations at least my family had been British-born, he speculated that my ancestry lay in 'Russia or Poland'. Nearly right; I wondered later whether he would have heard of Lithuania.

At a later point during the by-election, I was accused by a 'Mr Smith' – a mild-mannered gentleman who claimed membership of the party's national executive – of complicity in blood-guilt (killing Christian children in order to use their flesh for religious celebrations). Mr Smith was not British; at least he attested to Icelandic origins. I seemed to have entered a gruesome fantasy world of almost Gothic proportions.

It seemed to me then that it would be no bad thing if the leading figures of the National Front were exposed to the competitive stimulus of other politicians either at joint public meetings or on the broadcasting networks. All the other candidates at the Cambridge by-election – except for the Liberal – refused to speak on the same platform as Jeremy Wotherspoon. If his comrades make such fools of themselves in public as they do in private it might enliven the next general election. I hope that Mr Fountaine repeats his Cambridge line 'We are not social democratic, we are biological organic'. The British public will wonder at this new form of advertising detergents, if the National Front succeeds in its purpose of getting party political broadcasts in virtue of the 318 candidates that it hopes to run.

At the moment the most plausible rhetoric that the National Front can employ appeals to the attractions of martyrdom. Boycotted by respectable opinion and sent to Coventry by the political Establishment; prevented from speaking what they call their 'minds' by laws against incitement to racial hatred; stopped from using public halls in many places, except when they have to be allowed them at election time; persistently heckled, sometimes to the point of verbal oblivion, by left-wing or student demonstrators; denied television time – together these add up to a convincing trespass on traditional British sympathy for the politically exploited. I am not in favour of all these legal or social restrictions being lifted – but, in conjunction with their isolation on the rostrum, they allow the National Front to get away with absurd claims. Moreover if we believe in freedom of speech, we do not rightly believe in it just as a legal maxim; it should extend to our personal readiness for argument. If we combine it with another concession to press liberty – freedom to report previous prison records of public personalities – the political balance will be preserved. As someone once said: 'The National Front stand on their convictions – they have plenty of them.'

The distinguishing feature of National Front attitudes is their tendency to translate mentally the random disagreeable events of the recent past into a concerted and deliberate effort to destroy all that they hold dear. It is especially interesting to note how an identification is made – quite unconsciously – between disparate characteristics of our society: the dirt on the London streets, the dilapidated state of our housing, membership of the Common Market and the entry of coloured immigrants. In his Cambridge speech John Tyndall went straight from a description of a journey he made through the London streets that day – the uncollected rubbish and the lack of cleanliness and visible order that he detected – to a comment on the absence of white faces in Southall. The two were clearly associated in his mind; not just in the sense that immigrants were supposed to have 'produced' the dirt, but in the creeping chaos that the two sets of phenomena embodied. I hold no brief for waste paper – but I don't regard it as the major problem of our time. If the price of progress is urban matter in the wrong place – so be it.

The men of the National Front do not share the mental flexibility of the rest of their generation. They have for one reason or another become too used to the fixed social points of their childhood. I was struck by the frequency and intensity of their dirges for the British Empire – an analogy between its fall and the destruction of the Roman Empire was drawn by Mr Fountaine. I had hitherto imagined that this superannuated imperialism was not particularly *à la mode* for our thoroughly modern fascists. The influence of the League of Empire Loyalists – a constituent organisation when the National Front was formed in the late 1960s – has clearly persisted.

It seemed that the party cannot escape from the structured inheritances of its members' distant youth. They remember a Britain – or rather an England (the NF do not seem to do well north of the border) – characterised by social order, tidiness, military and political hierarchy, racial homogeniety, imperial authority. It requires no impossible leap of the imagination to see into their minds. To describe their attitudes by reference to childhood is not to abuse them; we all went through it. Their political priorities bear little or no conceivable relation to real problems: their emphasis on getting the 'reds out of the universities' has little real contribution to make, even according to their own terms, in combating the 'Marxist menace'.

The National Front often do far best at elections in wards of constituencies where few coloured immigrants have settled; their racialism thrives on fear rather than acquaintance. White people in this country may utter viciously racialist comments when they talk among themselves and in reference to the coloured immigrants as a community; but the paradox is that, despite 20 years of experience of a mixed society, we can count on the fingers of one hand the number of collective violent expressions of those feelings – Notting Hill, Bradford, Southall.

The Marxists make a great mistake if they see the support given to the National Front as a product of late-capitalist crisis. It is not just a function of economic difficulties – though it may be accentuated at those times. It is 'petit bourgoise' rather than 'haute bourgeois'. Nor is its audience simply motivated by racialism of a crude and inexplicable sort. Its racialism has to be seen as part of its general social outlook – in which the presence of different coloured skins from the majority in our country is only the outstanding object of assault. Physiognomic divergence is part of general social divergence from norms that have ceased to exist. Bewilderment in the face of the inexplicable – that is the best analysis of the personal predicament of National Front's supporters. They deserve our pity as well as our contempt.

Robert Silver is in his third year at Cambridge reading history. He is joint editor of the Cambridge Fabian Review.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Nothing Like a Dame

The alleged loneliness of the long distance runner is as nothing compared with that of the stand-up comedian who, much as he might wish to, cannot run but must stay right there where he is, centre-stage and alone and make us laugh. Of all theatrical assignments, and I include King Lear, this is by far the toughest. The first such entertainer that I ever saw, about 60 years ago, was in a pantomime and in the person of a male Mrs Crusoe, the mother of Robinson, a sprightly widow scraping a living as proprietress of a seaside boarding-house. With her orange hair permanently in curlers, she had a wealth of red flannel petticoats and scarlet bloomers constantly on view as she tripped repeatedly up ('Drat them bollards!') upon the quayside, her elastic-sided boots in all directions. In due course she was to be found, alone, upon six foot of stage in front of a flapping drop-curtain ('A street in Porttown'). Here, while invisible behind her the quayside was noisily changed to the deck of the Saucy Sue, the harassed hotelier told us of her late husband's marital infidelities ('My last child didn't resemble him at all') and her current worries, both culinary ('They won't touch my dumplings') and financial ('I have no money but my aunt has piles').

As a seasoned, not to say hardened, theatre-goer, I never imagined that the evening would come when I would gladly pay £3 to Barry Humphries for a stall seat in which to be cheerfully abused, handed a gladiolus (a real one, surprisingly) and instructed when to stand up and wave it to and fro (mine bent in the middle and hung down, producing a storm of criticism and doubt about my abilities in other directions). Prior to this activity, Mr Humphries had managed to persuade a nice married lady called June to give us the fullest imaginable details of her bathroom – colour of tiles round the bath ('a sort of fawn'), floor covering (lino in a 'fancy pattern'), curtains (swallows a-wing), the exact siting of the lavatory pan, the assortment of 'toilet requisites', and so on.

At each new horrific detail, Dame Edna Everage, for it was she, beamed her appreciation and gave a glad cry of 'Why June, that sounds just ex*qui*site!' Near June was seated a dusky foreigner whom Dame Edna chose to consider as being deaf, illiterate and dotty and to whom, through his shouts of delighted and hysterical laughter, she explained, elaborately mouthing, what was going on. In addition to his stage appearances, Mr Humphries has been widely exposed to the public on the telly, graciously receiving Miss Joan Bakewell in his 'simulated kitchen-dinette' and handing her some splendidly obscene-looking items of food. I do realise that you either like him or you don't and I make no apology for rating him, purely as a laughter-provider, as highly as I have (now in the past, alas) rated Miss Beatrice Lillie. Their techniques and material are poles apart, with the elegant Miss Lillie so restrained and coolly professional, and Dame Edna a great galumphing, hoydenish, warm-hearted amateur (as he lets it appear) but the results are the same.

Voracious, as they say, readers who can devour almost anything will have been prepared for Mr Humphries and for the breezy impact of Australia in general by the production by Messrs Collins a few years ago of *My Day*, selections from the diary of the wife of the then Prime Minister, Mrs Gough Whitlam, a lanky charmer from down under. There one read, fascinated, of her bedroom suite and the beige butterfly wallpaper, her blinds printed with 'coloured vegetables', weekends in the restful peace of Bondi Junction, the occasional comb-up at Radford's hairdressing salon, the shopping at Tall Gals and the games of golf ('I went berserk around a bunker'). There were also the free use of the adjectives 'super' and 'beaut', the multi-vitamin pills swallowed before a breakfast of fried lamb's brains with tomato ketchup, the occasional challenges ('Hands up those who know where Eaglehawk is') and confessions ('I'm not a poetry person'), the evening dress 'decorated with light garlands of wattle blossom in sequins', and the sipping, on festive occasions, of Seppelts Great Western Chablis and Penfolds Minchinbury Champagne ('the queen of all beverages').

From this somewhat weird reality it is but a short step to Dame Edna's world. No holds at all are barred by Mr Humphries and here, to relish during his absence from us, is an offering 'for the fans who crave some literary token from my quill', *Dame Edna's Coffee Table Book*: Limp Edition (Harrap, £3.95), 'a guide to gracious living and the finer things of life' and starting with, in early days, a Passion Play appearance as Mary Magdalene (the local chemist couldn't manage frankincense and myrrh so they compromised with a jar of Valderma and some Sloane's liniment, Mary subsequently rinsing her hair with a squirt of Loxene in a deconsecrated font backstage). Secure against her family background of three 'gorgeous kiddies', a hubby, Norm, prostrate with prostate, and the finest collection of diamanté costume jewellery in the Southern Hemisphere, we find this indomitable 'honours graduate from the University of Life' now happily telling us how to pronounce useful cultural names (Mike-ell-anne-jello. You-jean-Goose-ends), now musing on the ups and downs of a dentist's career ('How would you like to spend your time up-to-your-wrists in other people's dribble?').

There are sections on yoga, navel hygiene, crow's-feet ('What are crow's-feet but the dried up beds of old smiles?'), and the physical shortcomings of her old friend and bridesmaid, Madge Allsop ('I felt it my duty to put my foot down firmly on her facial hairs'). Most important of all is My Nightly Countdown to Natural Beauty and what to do, while sleeping, to help 'skin and crevice care' – place two soothing cuke discs on the eyes (secure them with Sellotape), pamper your brow with nourishing nana strips (sticky-side down), clamp a couple of juicy lemons on your armadillo elbows, feed your hungry face tissues ('a mayonnaise mask is perfect'), and try at all costs to sleep on your back.

When it comes to some of Dame Edna's recipes, one hardly knows what to believe, so persuasive do they sound. I think we can rule out Braised Emu Leg, Possum Pumpkin Pie ('a barbecue bonanza') and Bandicoot Stewed in Milk, despite the telling addition of '1 small blade of mace'. But what of a fish dish called Groper Surprise ('the most luscious parts are the immense gelatinous lips'), or Curried Rabbit in Grapefruit Cases, Moomba Meat Balls and Ravioli and Date Layer? Wiser not to attempt them, I suppose, but the whole fun lies in the fact that Dame Edna's activities, attitudes, clothes and bracing outlook are so close to the real thing that you cannot with confidence tell one from the other.

Roger Woddis

Rippon Rules OK

Angela Rippon has been picked as hostess for this year's Eurovision Song Contest at Wembley on 2 April.

Lovely mover, Beebish cutie,
Billy Cotton can't be wrong;
Europe will applaud your beauty,
Now you're going for a song.

Angela, you drive me frantic!
I the oyster, you the pearl,
Once a reader, now romantic
Corybantic Eurogirl!

Other stars, however vivid,
Pale beside you on the screen;
Esther Rantzen must be livid,
Shirley Williams must be green.

When you host the competition,
Oh! What undiluted joy!
You could run the whole Commission,
And you're prettier than Roy.

Killjoys only show their meanness
When they throw their rotten eggs;
Jenkins' ear, for all its keenness,
Can't compare with Rippon's legs.

Hurry up and learn the lingo
(Winner is '*celui qui gagne*');
Practise at your local bingo –
'En avant, la Grande Bretagne!'

What a blow to disbelievers!
Wembley, we can hardly wait!
Gimmicks, more than brains or beavers,
Make this country truly great.

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Letters to the Editor

Britain's Last Colony

Sir, News reaches us of the two motions on Hong Kong on the House of Commons Order Paper. The first, signed by 68 MPs calling for urgent social reform in the colony; and a second, tabled by 114 MPs in support of our present social programme. As a Christian social-action group with daily contact with industrial workers, we would like to share our grass-root view as we see it in Hong Kong.

Some social progress has been made in recent years. Although the qualifying conditions are fairly harsh and the bureaucratic scrutiny deliberately tough, a family in destitution are provided for with cash assistance covering basic needs and school fees. Although one normally has to queue up for a whole morning for two minutes of consultation at the out-patient public clinic, one can, if medically warranted, expect immediate admission to a hospital bed for $3 per day. Education in Hong Kong generally tends to domesticate, but a young person from a poor family is now being offered nine years of subsidised schooling. In the field of labour, we are promised a package of reforms which aim at the provision of annual paid holidays, and small cash assistance for the unemployed, and the improvement of severance payment and working conditions. By and large, in these aspects, Hong Kong compares favourably with other Asian countries.

But it is not to the developing countries in S.E. Asia that Hong Kong should compare itself (or, for that matter, to the industrial nations in the west). Hong Kong should be judged on the wealth gap between the common people and the privileged minority. On this score, Hong Kong's workers have been persistently shortchanged. Take the recession year 1974-75, for example. By September 1975, 170,000 or 9.1 per cent of the labour force was found to be unemployed. There was then absolutely no unemployment relief. Workers and their families managed by 'sharing the one bowl of rice which has temporarily replaced the normal two bowls' in the words of author Richard Hughes. However, big business, instead of having to tighten their belts, had to loosen theirs to provide for more room for greater profit. During the same period, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank increased its profit by 12 per cent. Jardine Matheson by 22 per cent. Swire Pacific's profit went from $37.9m. to $59.7m. Winsor, a giant textile and garment company, had its profit increased by 74 per cent over the previous year. The Governor, who has introduced some fine reforms, has publicly admitted that the recession 'hit the shopfloor much harder than it hit the board room'.

Since then, the life of the Hong Kong worker has become easier with the recovery of the economy. But labour's share of the pie has not increased. It has actually dwindled. In this connection, we must challenge a prominent element in the motion tabled by the Anglo-Hong Kong Parliamentary Group and signed by 114 MPs. The motion congratulates Hong Kong, among other things, 'in creating conditions' to 'increase their incomes at all levels'. This is certainly true for those in big business, but certainly untrue for labour. Admittedly, there have been wage increases in 1975-76, but the latest figure given for March 1976 (Half Yearly Economic Report Table 34) shows that real wages had not yet quite reached the amount given for September 1971. For four and a half years, workers' real income has dropped, not risen.

It is so easy to point to the TV, small refrigerator and telephone in a Hong Kong worker's home as proof of his wellbeing. The fact is the family has to be supported by three or even four incomes. In 1971, the population census shows that one average income could support three persons; now this is not possible. Let us be specific. According to government figures, an industrial worker makes a daily wage of $30. With a normal 26 working days, his monthly income amounts to $780. How much can this amount buy? Public Assistance recognises $180 per person for food as necessary to survive. So if the income is to support three persons, $540 had to go for food, leaving only $240 for rent and all other expenses. This is simply impossible. That leaves us with a clear conclusion that on an average 1976 income, a Hong Kong worker cannot support three mouths, as he could five years ago. His real income has fallen since 1971. As far as he is concerned, he can certainly do without the 114 MPs' congratulations.

Hong Kong is a prosperous city. Its labouring people do enjoy a living standard second only to Japan in Asia. But it has not come about because the wages are fair, or that working conditions are good. But rather because many, many people work (1.9 million out of 4.3 million are economically active); they work extremely hard for a wage just high enough to survive, but low enough to push the mother and the eldest teenage children into the shopfloor. There has been no increase in income for the Hong Kong worker.

For a variety of reasons, a sense of change now seems to be in the air. The other day, the director of the Social Welfare Department announced a plan for public assistance to the unemployed. But instead of presenting the plan as an achievement of the Government for the welfare of the people and thus winning their trust, the official chose to be apologetic. He minimised the impact of the measure, promised that it would benefit few people, and pointed out that $180 per month was very little anyway. Obviously, he addressed himself to the employers instead of the workers. He feels the need to justify himself to industrialists and businessmen rather than the potential recipients of his service. This official stupidity betrays Hong Kong's real problem. Hong Kong's decision-makers, in both business and government, do not see themselves as being accountable to the common people. To them, working men and women are objects of social control, not partners in the development of a good and just society.

RAYMOND FUNG
Director
Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee
Hong Kong

Marquand's Farewell

Sir, In framing his farewell to Westminster, David Marquand (NS 7 January) seems unconsciously to parody Jimmy Porter's bitter comments in *Look Back in Anger*. Middle-aged and elderly MPs are being kept out of bed and deprived of sleep in pursuit of irrelevant trivia. 'There are no big brave causes left.' If indeed this is so, then perhaps the fault lies less with the parties than with Mr Marquand and his parliamentary colleagues. If, as he apparently does, you believe that the discovery of the mixed economy rendered superfluous any subsequent arguments about the proportions of the mix, or the terms upon which the whole outfit continues to be operated, it is probable that you too will find irritating little side-issues about the right of dock-workers to have access to jobs in the container depots, or the need to sustain viable and accountable aerospace and shipbuilding industries boring and a waste of time. Certainly, they aren't high drama by any standards. But while we continue to live in a society boasting massive inequalities of wealth, power and privilege, even the faltering attempts of the present Government to shift the balance a little deserve something better than David Marquand's sniffy dismissal. Trendy revisionists may find environmentalism more exciting, more vivid, especially at motorway public inquiries, but does Mr Marquand seriously think that bureaucrats and civil engineers are the only people left who still want to build motorways? Is the British Roads Federation merely a front organisation for the dreaded D. of E.? Party activists have for years been trying to tell the PLP that there are only two possible transport policies. One, which we have at present, is to allow the road haulage industry to expand unchecked (except by bankruptcies) and the motorway network thus expands to fill the open space available for its completion. The other is to try to restore by means of an integrated transport network some sort of order and structure. This will involve socialist planning, and a degree of government intervention. But it might also help solve some of the problems so vividly fought out at motorway inquiries. Rank and file Labour Party members are, in my experience, quite aware of this, but if Mr Marquand and his colleagues weren't listening when we tried to tell them, they have only themselves to blame. And if all they have left is the new 'nothing-very-much-thank-you', and the crucial battles are conducted elsewhere, have they not brought it on themselves?

PETER D. JOHNSON
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Bolton, Lancs.

The Criminal Law Bill

Sir, Geoff Robertson's article 'Labour Challenges the Jury' (NS 10 December) reaches a new high level of irresponsibility even for a journal of your proclivities. The purpose of the Criminal Law Bill is to activate the main proposals of the James Committee for the Redistribution of Criminal Business. On the whole, it does this very fairly and very effectively. Your contributor proceeds by alleging that the James Committee was 'stacked' and then, naturally, comes to the conclusion that the stacked Committee has produced a report which will deny substantial liberties to the subject.

As one whose job is to conduct magistrates' courts day by day and as a member of the Association of Magisterial Officers I think I have a far better appreciation of what the James Committee was trying to do than your correspondent. Our members are daily subjected

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to the frustrations and exploitations necessarily involved in the present system. We welcome most of the recommendations of the James Committee and their incorporation into the Bill. If your contributor knew a little more about the way criminals and their advisers play the system and do well out of it he would not have written so jejune and feckless an article.

The main purpose of the Bill is to transfer to the magistrates' court the kind of work they do best and quickest and to spare the state some of the piratical plundering it now suffers. The Crown Courts are, on the whole, horribly slow, horribly expensive, absurdly jealous of prerogatives and the unrestricted playground of old gentlemen with 'far out' theories of reforming the criminal (at the expense of the rest of us). The time has come to end the nonsense of allowing a man charged with stealing a sixpenny bar of chocolate to choose an expensive and lengthy trial at a Crown Court with a mug jury and lashings of free legal aid for all concerned. The Bill puts an end to this nonsense – and high time too.

In 1974 the Crown Courts cost £11.8m. to deal with 3.16 per cent of all criminal work, while magistrates courts (which dealt with the remaining 96.84 per cent) cost £25.5m. Legal aid in the Crown Courts cost £14.3m. (for that tiny percentage of cases) and £9.3m. in the magistrates courts. Everybody knows how the cost of legal aid has escalated in the last two years. We can no longer afford the host of those who batten upon it. The only ones who will suffer by the bringing in of the new Bill will be villains and those now battening expensively upon the legal aid fund. Which lot is Geoff Robertson rooting for?

STANLEY GOODMAN

Victoria Lodge
1 Alton Road
Plymouth

The Liverpool Street Inquiry

Sir, Leo Plendello is generous in conceding ('Terminal Disease', NS 7 January) that we have 'made a good stab' at answering questions ducked by British Rail in the matter of the proposed redevelopment of Liverpool Street Station, and says it is important that the opportunity should arise to put forward a better case for retention of the buildings, with more facts and money. Unfortunately such an opportunity will only arise after a decision has been made by the Secretary of State, so it is important that he makes a decision to reject British Rail's outline planning and listed building applications which, as they stand, require the demolition of all buildings on site with the exception of the Great Eastern Hotel.

Whilst it is true we have 'not had an easy time with the many technical questions', we have at least recognised their importance and employed consulting railway engineers to demonstrate that other solutions are possible, whereas the GLC and the other local authorities involved preferred to take British Rail's word for it that their solution was the only one. We have not had to 'settle out of court' with British Rail on any of these aspects, and in fact discussions are still going on, during which we hope to establish that it is not necessary to demolish the listed office building fronting the forecourt, known as 50 Liverpool Street. If this can be shown it is unlikely that the outcome hazarded by Leo Plendello, namely permission for a new station constructed round the retained western trainshed, will result. It just does not make economic sense to scrap the mass of other serviceable buildings that form the rest of this complex, and if the western trainshed is to be kept, then it would be logical to keep the eastern trainsheds, 50 Liverpool Street, Hamilton House and Broad Street Station as well. There are many possible uses for the latter, ranging from incorporation in the new station to partial demolition to allow space for offices whilst keeping the front part as a library, livery hall or whatever. The three alternative schemes put forward by us at the public inquiry were not intended as finite, worked-out proposals, but as a series of tentative, exploratory studies to demonstrate that there are many ways of accommodating British Rail's requirements for a modernised station and office buildings, all of which keep the bulk of the existing buildings on the site.

Finally we have not 'rushed in where the Victorian Society has merely tiptoed'. We are actually representing them and the other national societies concerned with historic buildings at the public inquiry.

ALAN STONES
Chairman

Liverpool Street Station Campaign
13 New End
London NW3

Mr Richard Changes Planes

Sir, Your editorial states, 'If Western socialists made a real effort, they could help the Africans of Southern Africa not just to throw off their current masters but to establish a system which would reproach the shortcomings of Kenya, Malawi and other thwarted post colonial regimes' (NS, 7 January). Unhappily, you don't indicate the form that 'a real effort' by socialists would take, other than calling Messrs Vorster, Smith and Richard nasty names. Do you have anything in mind?

It is lazy of you to write about majority rule when you mean rule by another gang of bullies who happen to be African and not white. This is precisely the slipshod illiberality which brought thousands onto the streets (including myself) against the Americans in Vietnam, but now leaves us at home replaying Dylan records while Cambodia and Vietnam endure a ghastlier murdering authoritarianism.

You judge that the Foreign Office 'represent myopia and betrayal'; so does the promiscuous and instant simplicity of mind which you call socialism's real effort.

R. P. T. HINES

33 Glisson Road
Cambridge

Aims for What?

Sir, Aims for Freedom and Enterprise must be rather short of arguments if it has to rely on an alleged pronouncement of Adolf Hitler in February 1941 – when he had a friendship pact with Moscow – that 'basically National Socialism and Marxism are the same'. Mr Ivens's claim that this 'is very much in keeping with Hitler's political approach' is ludicrous. After all, it has become common knowledge that the 'smashing' and 'eradicating' of Marxism was one of Hitler's main aims in life. But the whole controversy is far too much ado about absolutely nothing, as Hitler never said anything of that kind. The Munich speech of 24 February 1941, to which the original advertisement referred, has been reprinted by Max Domarus in his collection *Hitler, Reden und Proklamationen* (Wuerzburg 1963), Vol. II, pp 1667-1670. At this moment, Hitler fulminated as usual against Jews, democrats, war mongers etc., but for good tactical reasons of his own he did not even utter the word 'Marxism'.

J. W. BRUEGEL

21 Connaught Drive
London NW11

Coronations and the Future

Sir, Any changes at the next Coronation (London Diary 7 January) should involve the oath to maintain the Protestant faith. Edward VII was unhappy about such promises and now the largest group of churchgoers in the UK is Roman Catholic. The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster should be given a major role in the ceremony and the Prince of Wales allowed to marry a Roman Catholic if he wishes – Her Majesty has come out in favour of the 'Peace Movement' aims.

There is no constitutional necessity for the Coronation and an exact repeat of the 1953 service would be a great mistake in our changed circumstances. Let us look again at our original Coronations.

LEIGH HATTS
Prospective Labour Candidate for
Christchurch & Lymington
9 Stoke Wood Road
Bournemouth

The Károlyis

Sir, A. J. P. Taylor wrote in your Christmas and New Year Double Issue that Count Michael Károlyi's ancestor won the title of a Count in the early 19th century by saving the Habsburg Monarchy, and that Count Michael himself destroyed the monarchy in the early 20th. With all respect for the great historian, the first Count Károlyi was Sánder (Alexander) in the early 18th century, created because he had deserted the fight for Hungarian independence in Ferenc Rakesi and was instrumental in the peace treaty between the Hungarians (disastrous to them) and the Habsburgs. Count Michael was the protagonist of the parliamentarian fight against World War I, and was for three months the President of the short-lived Hungarian Republic in 1919. The fate of the monarchy did not depend on him.

ROBERT MAJOR

Landskrongasse 4
Vienna

Unsafe Transport

Sir, As a tailpiece to your readers' letters on transport policy I should like to draw attention to the safety limitations of road transport. According to a House of Commons written reply on 1 December in the period from 1 January, 1945 to 30 June last year 204,100 persons were killed and 9,171,000 injured in road accidents in the UK. It should be added that about one quarter of the injured would be classified as seriously injured.

As far as I have been able to trace, this reply has not been quoted in the daily press nor on television or radio. Does this reticence reflect the immense financial power of the road lobby? Motorways are praised by the Ministry of Transport as Britain's 'safest' roads but every year on average four persons are killed or injured on every mile of motorway.

T. C. FOLEY

The Pedestrians' Association for Road Safety
166 Shaftesbury Avenue
London WC2

Nooky Corner

Sir, I have come across in Vol. I of George Orwell's *Collected Essays* a statement in a letter of his to a friend that he had bought for a shilling (in 1934) a year's issue of a weekly paper of 1851. It had, he recounts, as a feature, a matrimonial agency and describes a lady applicant for the matrimonial stakes as 'Flora is 21, tall, with rich chestnut hair and a silvery laugh, and makes excellent light pastry. She would like to enter into correspondence with a professional gentleman between the ages of 20 and 30, preferably with auburn whiskers and of the Established Church.'

Plus ça change!

A. G. MCBAIN

10 Hamilton Avenue
Glasgow

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Jones

The Man of Sense

The Correspondence of John Locke Vols I and II edited by E. S. de Beer *Oxford* £25.00 each

Bertrand Russell describes himself as a young man going on long solitary afternoon walks while he pondered the Cretan Liar and other vexing problems; and, as he walked and thought, he says he formed the habit of talking to Leibniz. Why Leibniz? I think it would be misleading to answer: because he was a logician – in Russell's mature view the only logician of the first importance in the two-and-a-bit millenia between Aristotle and Frege. No doubt Russell talked to Leibniz about logic, but the nub is that he talked *to* Leibniz; he had fallen in love with his mind rather as he fell in love with Conrad's mind, and perhaps with Conrad, later on.

Conversely, I think it would be misleading to say that Locke, Leibniz's contemporary, was left out of the conversation on those rambles because he was no logician and indeed no sort of mathematician (when Locke and Newton met they discussed the text of the Bible). Russell and Locke would have had plenty to talk *about*. A whole range of Western institutions can be traced back to Locke, and a vast hazy amalgam of liberal and libertarian beliefs. He has no rival among philosophers in public and practical importance, unless you call Marx a philosopher or unless you marxify Hegel as Lukács did. Locke defined much of modern and especially American mentality; and furthermore, the areas he mapped – religious toleration, freedom of the press, his anti-Hobbes version of the Social Contract (*autres temps, autres moeurs*), humane education, theory of knowledge – are very much Russell country.

Alone with Leibniz, 'I tell *him*' (writes Russell) 'how fruitful his ideas have proved, and how much more beautiful the result is than he could have foreseen.' The second half of that statement bears on Locke. His mind is not beautiful in its articulation (Berkeley), nor in its instinctive radical posture (Spinoza), nor in drama and self-division (Plato and Hegel), nor in its austerity (Kant), nor its range coupled with its strength (Aristotle, the Leonardo of Philosophy).

Then does it follow that Locke is not among the greatest philosophers? I'm not sure. I can't imagine addressing that beauty talk to Hume, whose mind is not in any sense gravid with beauty; but no sane man would deny that Hume was a giant. And if Hume, why not Locke? Perhaps we are simply noting a fact about British empiricism's involvement with brute contingency. As Pushkin remarks, if you choose to live in a privy you must expect to smell of shit.

But some will want to meet my insinuation head on and proclaim that Locke *is* beautiful, that he is the first and finest flower of Anglo-Saxon common sense. Well, there is common sense and common sense:

> He who binds to himself a joy
> Does the winged life destroy;
> But he who kisses the joy as it flies
> Lives in eternity's sun rise.

That is common sense, no less tough-minded for being sublime, no less a revelation for being obvious – and it is far beyond Locke. And anybody who is tempted to think it is beyond Philosophy itself should consider the unpossessive kiss of contemplation which is the heart of Kant's theory of art, or the thoughts on love and duty in Hegel's *Jugendschriften* and the Master and Servant pages of his *Phenomenology*. Or he should go for long walks, Russell fashion, with Socrates.

Nevertheless 'common sense' and 'the plain fact' are at the centre of Locke's universe. They are both his mind's bridle and its star to steer by. Common sense reins him in, makes him change course; unlike Hume, a less rigorous thinker than Hume, he would rather contradict himself than affront 'the fact'. The result is that he loses many arguments. But he wins the debate. Posterity's plain man has stayed with Locke because he wears the same bridle, and equally because he follows the same star. He confirms Locke's broad objective untroubled by the fact that the campaign is at best very ununified and at worst chaotic. Hence the great, the probably unique practical influence I spoke of.

The thrust and opportunism of Locke's philosophical persona are scarcely in evidence in these first two volumes of his correspondence. Nor do we hear much about his entanglements in public life. We are in a smaller and warmer world of family and friends, and surely that is to be hoped for in a man's letters. But a moment's pause to take stock.

Locke's dates are 1632-1704. We have here 1,500 pages taking us to 1686. The edition is planned in eight volumes, so the amount of material surviving from the last 18 years must be immense and surely unequalled in England before the high 18th century. Having finished this first instalment with profit and pleasure but also with a certain sense of achievement, I brace my faculties against the arrival of the rest.

The Lockes were minor Somerset gentry with a typical easy English span from tanning to the law. John's father was a captain of horse in the Civil War under Colonel Popham, and through Popham John gained a place at Westminster School. The earliest letters show him practising Latin and Hebrew orations at Westminster with his sights set on Christ Church, which remained his academic home until 1684 when he was expelled. (Thus Oxford disposed of her greatest philosopher, whereas in the next century Gibbon and Johnson, respectively her greatest historian and man of letters, merely left without degrees; and in the century after that Housman, her best classical scholar – Bentley and Porson were Cambridge men – failed to obtain honours but was granted a pass degree: so things are getting better all the time. No, perhaps they aren't, since Shelley was expelled too.)

John Locke was a shy young man. His letters home are almost oppressively dutiful. There are two or three muted love letters, and one Valentine: 'I cannot with moderation and without extasy consider where and by whome my name hath been worne.' (Alas, where did she put that?) He is observer, never member, of an expedition against Corpus Christi College next door by 'a Ch: Ch: party fild with mighty valour and potentiall ale'. He soon develops a pawky, donnish sense of humour, so that if he finds himself stuck in a miserable old place he will call it 'very little considerable for anything but its antiquity'.

That is in a letter to Robert Boyle, the scientist – Boyle of Boyle's Law. 'I hope, Sir, you will lett slippe noe occasion whereby you may better your selfe, and soe me, by your aquaintance with Mr Boyle,' writes a prudent friend, and in due course we find Locke walking up and down a hill with a barometer in his hand and reporting to Boyle: 'I observed that proportionably as I was higher or lower on the Hill, the Mercury fell or rose.' At this point the life described in the letters becomes one with the life of mind, for Locke's philosophy (to put it in a mini-nutshell) is the child of Boyle and Descartes, of English experiment and French rationalism.

The Cartesian parent is missing in these volumes, and indeed we get very little sense that Locke is writing or pondering the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* and the two *Treatises of Government* on which his fame through the centuries depends. Instead, the practical man comes across with his interests in education, horticulture, medicine, the law; the much-travelled man – 'our Jumbling up and downe' he calls it – observing as he goes. A lot of it is at the level of 'Keep the head warm, the feet cool, and bowels open' (there is common sense, I said, and common sense); but in his work to mitigate the horrors of religious persecution Locke's is a shining record of decency and courage as well as intelligence.

I find his dullness about art and morals a fearful deprivation, and his overarching predictability of mind a fret. Of course I wouldn't call him 'the reproach of the English nation', but I quote Winckelmann with relish. Nobody whose heart is with the Greeks and the Germans, and with odd men out like Pascal, can expect to love Locke; but he can admire him, and admiration carries one through these volumes, edited firmly, never fussily, by Dr de Beer and produced in the grand tradition of academic publishing.

'Academic' may perhaps mislead. This is not specialist reading but, on the contrary, a thing of many-sided interest. I therefore end with a sombre piece of stale news: its

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publication date was over three months ago. Becoming aware of a strange silence, I wrote to the Oxford University Press. Their courteous letter beside me now explains that no review copies were sent to the 'heavy' Dailies or Sundays, and none to the Weeklies except the *Listener*, who say they are waiting until the set is complete, in 1979, to notice the work. I blame nobody. But what a calamity – what an omen! – for publishing, for journalism, for libraries, for reading people everywhere.

John Porteous

Money, Money, Money

Choice in Currency by F. A. HAYEK *IEA Occasional Paper* £1.00
Denationalisation of Money by F. A. HAYEK *IEA Hobart Paper* £1.80

One day in October 1497 the Bishop of Liège was crossing the Grande Place in Brussels. He noticed a crowd gathered in one part of the square and drew near to find out what was going on. A herald was reading a proclamation and the Bishop approached just in time to hear his own money of Liège formally declared of no value, being of such poor quality that it could no longer be permitted to circulate in any of the Duke of Burgundy's territories. The Bishop slipped quietly from the back of the crowd and left Brussels that evening.

The principle of non-interference in the right of a government to ruin itself and its people is so jealously maintained these days that the Bishop's 20th-century epigone might expect to hear an announcement that his money was really very undervalued. The charm of the medieval story is that for once the issuer of bad money actually gets his come-uppance.

The reason for the Bishop's discomfiture was that in Brussels, outside his own little principality, he was in no position to insist on anyone taking his money. It is a simple discipline, to have to comply with market forces, but a strict one which governments resent and, as issuers of money, generally seek to avoid for as long as possible. Professor Hayek believes that such discipline would nevertheless do them and us some good. On further reflection, he thinks it would be even better if governments were deprived of their monopoly of the issue of money altogether.

The chief interest of *Choice in Currency* is that it is the prelude to the fuller and much more revolutionary *Denationalisation of Money*. Broadly its thesis is that inflation would be much reduced if governments bound themselves to be rid of all currency controls and to allow banks unfettered operation in each other's countries. It would then be open to all to make contracts, to price their goods or their labour, to borrow or to lend, to let or to hire, in whatever currency they could agree upon. Professor Hayek argues that in absolute terms there is no such thing as good or bad money; that money is only overvalued or undervalued; and that it derives those tiresome qualities from governments which insist upon fixing the value. Without this interference, all money would find its own price and Gresham's law would not operate.

Douglas Jay, in a dissenting note printed as an appendix to *Choice in Currency*, draws attention to the most obvious problem arising from this proposal, namely the practical inconvenience of, say, tendering a rouble note to a London bus conductor and then arguing the toss about the rate of exchange. Hayek thinks this a small inconvenience to pay for better monetary discipline. Anyway, in Salzburg, where he now lives, the bus conductors know a good currency when they see it and will always take a Deutschmark if you offer them one. With practice we should soon all learn to do the same.

But supposing it were not a rouble that you held out but, as Professor Hayek's more advanced proposal would have it, a *ducat* issued by the Swiss Bank Corporation, a *thaler* of the Dresdner Bank or even a *koban* of the Bank of Tokyo. Here Douglas Jay's argument from commonsense does have a certain practical force, with every transaction carrying in it the makings of a *Candid Camera* altercation. Yet this practical problem is comparatively superficial. *Denationalisation of Money* proposes not only a change in social habits, but a profound political change.

A long life under many different regimes, beginning with the Habsburgs, has convinced Professor Hayek that even well intentioned governments are ill-qualified for the task of running currencies and that not too many of them are well-intentioned anyway. He might add, but doesn't, that many of his contemporaries, fellow-subjects once of Franz Josef, look back upon the currency reforms of successive governments, first Nazi and later Soviet-dominated, as the administrative acts which in the long run have most altered their lives – for the worse.

They have experienced the wilful misuse of monetary power. Hayek, however, sees weak management of currencies, responding always to the exigencies of the moment, as scarcely less harmful. He believes that monetary instability is the root cause of the violent movement from boom to slump which has been the principal vice of capitalism from the beginning.

In his view the essential weakness of the present system of monetary management lies in the relationship between the two money-creating agencies, the central bank and the commercial banks. When the government wishes to stimulate the economy, the commercial banks are encouraged to create deposits. They go to this profitable task with a will; but when a reaction follows, the central bank is obliged to step in to rescue them and so in effect to accumulate all the excessive monetary growth of the expansionary phase. It is essential to Hayek's system that no such underwriting is to take place. The banks that will create money under his dispensation will stand or fall on their own, with no lender of last resort. The buck, or as you might say the ducat, stops with the bank which issues it.

It is proposed that from D-day anyone would be allowed to issue money, their only requirement being to find someone else who will accept it as such. Hayek envisages that the new currencies would be few in number: the creations of major banks or banking consortia, convertible into either a range of already existing national currencies, or gold, or a group of essential commodities, or some combination of these. Since no one would be obliged to hold any given currency, each, even of those issued by the state, would have to be made stable enough to make people want to hold them. The quality of the currency would thus be continuously maintained by competition.

Stable money, which Hayek proposes as an end in itself, or at least as a necessary condition of a just society, is a conservative ideal. His method of achieving it, however, is truly anarchic, and will appeal to libertarians on the simple ground that it deprives governments of a power which they have persistently misused. But what might induce the government to give up so much of its power? Douglas Jay again puts his finger on the problem when he suggests that Hayek is flying in the face of reality if he thinks you can take control of the currency out of the hands of modern elected governments. 'The public,' he adds, 'will not allow control of money to be put beyond their control.' It is not Hayek the economist, but Hayek the political philosopher, who counters by suggesting that, if we drop from this argument the emotionally loaded words 'public' and 'modern elected governments', if we say simply 'the ruler will not allow control of money to be put beyond his

D. J. Enright

A missionary unfrocked

We were God's own locksmiths.
To deliver the land of the heathen
From error's chain was our duty.
We could track down a fault most surely.
They hung us with garlands of jasmine
And sweat, with their women, held cheaply,
Who held us dearly.
We grew less sure of our native skills.
We took their vices to add to our own,
Their virtues more rarely.

Now we dream of stale frangipani,
Of the monsters we hunted who caught us.
Our fingertips go hungry,
Unless some pale shadow accosts us:
'Are you feling lonely, dearie?'
And we take her tome to wind in a sari.
But we are brought low by our losses
Of grace, scope and heresy.
The Lord has taken His Keys back,
We shall find no delivery.

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control', we see that the problem is the same for us as for the subjects of Franz Josef or Lenin, Louis XIV or Robespierre, or even of the Bishop of Liège.

It would have seemed unthinkable 400 years ago that governments would ever relinquish control over religious belief. Today the practical obstacles in the way of achieving Professor Hayek's monetary regime seem immense. Yet the sort of economic catastrophe which might lead the world to look at his ideas is becoming less improbable. As Samuel Brittan wrote when *Choice in Currency* first appeared, Hayek's apparently fanciful and politically impossible ideas may yet hold the field when the recurrent sterling crises which now obsess us have faded to historical insignificance. For this reason the historical and political problems raised in *Denationalisation of Money* call for serious examination.

First, on the historical side, there is practical experience of how men behave when they are given a choice of currency. Maybe pre-industrial Europe is an unsure guide to our own day, but the historical precedents from that early time are not encouraging. The social problem is that, where choice exists, it is the poor and the weak who end up holding the thorny end of the stick.

We can always rely upon the market to sort out the wheat from the chaff, but what is society to do about those who end up with nothing but chaff, as some will? Even Professor Hayek departs from the rigour of market principle at one point when he suggests that, where an issuing bank has ceased to operate and its currency become valueless, contracts written in that currency between third parties might be enforced by the courts in some other currency on the basis of a stable price. Yet this exception, if allowed, would undermine his whole system.

It must be contemplated that from time to time currencies will collapse. In theory, public interest in the proper management of the private currencies, aided by a vigilant press, 'the thousand hounds', in Hayek's curious phrase, who would be after a banker who failed to safeguard the value of his currency, would ensure that remedial action was taken in time. In practice all our experience of the press in its attitude towards unsound but dazzling financiers, from John Law to Jim Slater, is that it follows them with adulation on the way up and with contumely on the way down. To change that you must change not just the law of libel but human nature.

National currencies must always have the advantage over private currencies, since in the last resort they are always good for paying taxes and fines to the government which issues them. Historically it is that useful function which led to the nationalisation of money in the first place. Many advantages would ensue from the improvement in national money that potential competition would bring about: not least the total divorce of fiscal from monetary policy. Yet this would follow from Hayek's first and less exotic plan for the abolition of exchange control.

To practical men, Hayek's more advanced scheme of private money must seem to exist only in cloud cuckoo land. Yet perhaps it is the practical men who are in cloud cuckoo land, believing that the world's present monetary arrangements can last for more than another generation.

Mervyn Jones

That's That

My Years in an Indian Prison by MARY TYLER *Gollancz* £5.20

Prison books, far more than the records of a journey or even living in a foreign country, come out of a nakedly real and transforming experience. They have a natural dramatic structure made by the spaces of endurance between the sudden moments of incarceration and release. They are the fruit of close observation and deep reflection. They tell us in concentrated form of the arbitrary, random workings of what we call fate. They draw on a compassionate understanding of normally unconsidered human beings: for the writer cannot close his mind to his fellow-prisoners, however little thought he may have given to people like them when free. These are the reasons, I think, why prison books often attain the quality of literature. Certainly that can be said of this book by Mary Tyler, written with simplicity and directness and clearly without literary ambition. It is a revealing, terrifying, moving, admirable book.

You'll recognise Mary Tyler well enough as a radical girl of the Sixties: intelligent, ardent, and ready to burn her boats. She met Amalendu Sen in a train in Germany. He belonged to the most ultra-left of India's three communist parties, the group commonly known as Naxalites and devoted to revolution by means of peasant uprisings. I think myself that their theories recklessly ignored the many differences between China in 1927 and India in 1967, but what they attempted in certain Bengali villages gave a spurt of hope to people brutally oppressed. Mary Tyler went to India and was so affected by what she saw that she decided to stay and married Sen. They then went to a village, presumably a village where Sen and his comrades had some support; but if he had any intentions on this trip beyond that of completing his bride's political education, it hasn't been proved. They were arrested; she was taken to a prison in Bihar and he to the main prison in Calcutta. That was in May 1970. In June 1975, after repeated postponements, she was brought to trial on charges of sedition, but no evidence had been produced before she was suddenly told that all charges were dropped and was given a one-way ticket to London. Sen has not yet been tried, and scores of the Naxalites are in the same situation.

Mary Tyler's fellow-prisoners included many political dissidents, strikers and student demonstrators. From her worm's eye view she confirms the point made analytically by Dilip Hiro in his *Inside India Today* which I reviewed here (NS, 8 October 1976): that in terms of human rights the difference between India as an official democracy and India under Mrs Gandhi's 'emergency' regime is one of degree. At any period, trial delays are indefinite and releases – when not secured by bribery or influence – are a matter of policy; the view held by the authorities is clearly that people holding certain opinions should be behind bars for certain periods of time, and that's that.

The fact that political prisoners are treated in this way is bad enough, but only someone who has been in jail would be able to show that the same goes for ordinary people who fall foul of the law and can't afford a good lawyer. Women often have to bring their children into prison (you can forget about the myth of the protective extended family) and one character in the Hazaribagh story is Prokash, who arrived there two days old and had yet to see the outside world when Ms Tyler said goodbye to him five years later; the mother hadn't even been presented with a charge-sheet. Again, we meet a husband and wife accused of harvesting rice on land which they claimed to be theirs, but which was also claimed by a rich peasant. The husband died after four years without trial, the wife is still waiting.

Such people have no friends. Ms Tyler had some, notably Walter Schwarz of the *Guardian*, who wrote effectively about her case; but her friends didn't include the staff of the British High Commission. One of

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SWEET TOOTH

by Yves Navarre, a sensitive but very bizarre novel about gay life in New York, has had some violent and mixed reviews here following French bestsellerdom: "cruel, barbarous and amoral," "a serious novel" *(D. Telegraph)*, "The vices are all there, all the latest chic ways of self-destruction from across the Atlantic, but the style is accomplished, clear and lucidly translated" *(S. Times)* "a Kafkaesque analogy threaded into the consciousness of the novel. It is a deeply sour work but upon that level a magnificent one" *(Gay News)*. This is the most talked about novel as 1977 begins. Read it! (casebound £5.50)

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these gentlemen, in a letter to her parents, described her as 'set in her views and unrepentant'. Maybe it's naïve to say that her views had nothing to do with her right to justice, or that proof of guilt should come before repentance, but I still find the letter nauseating, the more so if its purpose was to deter the Tylers from making a fuss. Late in the day though it is, one would like to see Mr Crosland reminding this official of his duties.

Conditions in the prison were appalling. The food was not only inadequate but often stale and rotten, so that most of the prisoners were chronically ill. The poorly-paid warders supplemented their salaries by corruption, known by the English word 'income'. Bribes were needed to get medical treatment, to be allowed visits, to send or receive letters. To be able to bribe, the prisoners could only sell their miserable rations and reduce themselves to near-starvation. Things were even worse at Jamshedpur, a place with a torrid climate to which Ms Tyler was taken several times as her trial was to be held there. She records:

> There were 44 women and 12 children sharing the 15-foot-square cage. At night they were packed in rows, unable to turn one way or the other without great difficulty, young and old, sick and healthy, mad and sane, all crammed in together.

But the horrors are in no way overstressed, and the value of this book derives mainly from what Ms Tyler learned, by listening to prisoners, about the life of India: the continuing obsession with caste, the contempt for untouchables and tribespeople, the power exerted by money and 'good connections' even at the pettiest level, the pervasive social injustice. The crimes of the prisoners, even when legally proven or frankly admitted, could in almost every case be directly related to their poverty and to the social structure. Most of these crimes were either thefts whose motive was survival, or the use of land without legal title; and what is one to say of the man who killed a money-lender who was pestering his wife to repay the impossible debt by the use of her body? The rate of interest (12 per cent per month is common in the Indian countryside) is an illegality, for on paper such usury has been abolished, like forced labour and untouchability; but it isn't the money-lender who goes to jail. Here indeed are *les forçats de la faim, les damnés de la terre*. All is set down with a warm compassion, a totally persuasive veracity, and yet a wonderful restraint and calmness. By writing only about an Indian prison, Mary Tyler has written one of the very best books about India.

Among this week's contributors:

WOLF BIERMANN was born in 1936; in 1953 he left Hamburg to settle in East Germany; in 1962 he was prohibited from public appearances in East Germany but allowed to sing and read in West Germany, once, in 1964. In 1965 his first book of poems was published in West Berlin by Klaus Wagenbach; in the same year a final prohibition was put upon his work in the East. Last December he made a family visit to Hamburg and was deprived of his citizenship of the German Democratic Republic.

Derek Mahon

Fugitives

Memories and Essays Old and New 1926-1974 by ALLEN TATE *Carcanet* £4.80

Allen Tate's last prose book, *Essays of Four Decades*, had, he says, a limited focus and a severe purpose, being concerned with 'poetry and fiction as actualisations of culture'. The present collection is a more relaxed, even casual affair. Not a ragbag exactly, for the level of his work, in prose as in verse, is consistently, even aggressively, high. As Frank Kermode remarked of that earlier collection, Tate's prose shares with the poems 'a tough latinate vocabulary with controlled colloquial interventions; a style learnt from a despair of aristocracy'. And this is as true of the book reviews he wrote for a living in his younger days as it is of more substantial pieces like those on Poe, Valéry and Hart Crane, reprinted here. No doubt this elevated tone owes a great deal to Tate's Virginian background. Other American poets of Southern origin and more recent vintage have been American poets first and foremost; but Tate and his friends were obsessed with their region. Born within living memory of the Civil War, they could hardly have been otherwise.

The book is in two parts, the Memories and the Essays. The Memories consist of an autobiographical sketch (young Allen being taken to visit an old lady who had been a family slave, young Allen reading poems to bored belles); a personal history of the Fugitive movement; reminiscences (again!) of Paris in the Twenties; and tributes to fellow writers, those on John Peale Bishop and Faulkner being particularly good. But the really valuable material here, of course, is the inside story of the Fugitive movement, from its beginnings in 1921 as a discussion group of Vanderbilt University students to the success of individual members as poets, novelists and critics. Most of the early names are forgotten now, but Tate himself, John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren have each made a permanent contribution to American literature; while the ultra-Southern Donald Davidson, if Tate is to be believed, is a poet who receives less attention than he deserves. An intriguing aspect of Tate's account is that, for all its attentive courtliness (the Fugitives, it seems, were gentlemen, in contrast to the crazy Midwestern drunks and toughs who worked out of New York), elusive traces of bad feeling are sometimes discernible. But they stuck together, united by their devotion to 'the culture of the South' and by youthful ties of friendship.

Tate quotes with amusement and approval a remark by Sylvia Beach's partner Adrienne Monnier: 'Monsieur Tate is so conservative that he's almost radical.' Another way of putting this would be to say that he was so radical that he was obliged to be conservative. When the Fugitives went political they were accused of advocating a return to the 'Old South'. Not true, says Tate: in any case, 'the South has enjoyed a longer period of identity in defeat than it might have been able to preserve in victory'. Tate, like Poe and Crane, is an existentialist, albeit a Christian one; and his supposed nostalgia for the 'Old South' is really the individual's need for a structure, cosmic as much as social, in which to be sane:

> The imaginative writer is the archaeologist of memory, dedicated to the minute particulars of the past, definite things – *prima sacrimenti memoria*. If his 'city' is to come alive again from a handful of shards, he will try to fit them together in an elusive jigsaw puzzle, most of the pieces of which are forever lost.

Hilary Rubinstein

House Styles

The Truth About Publishing by STANLEY UNWIN eighth edition, revised and partly rewritten by Philip Unwin *Allen & Unwin* £5.95

You won't find the late Sir Stanley Unwin in the *Guinness Book of Records*, but the sustained success of *The Truth About Publishing*, first published in 1926, translated into 13 languages, and now reissued in its eighth edition, is an extraordinary phenomenon. For any book to be still in print after 50 years is a rare enough event, but that a trade manual should flourish continuously as a standard work for half a century is even more remarkable. Can whatever was the truth about publishing in the Twenties possibly still be true for the Seventies?

The short answer is – no, it can't. The book ought to have been completely rewritten, but familial piety has suggested a compromise: obsolete passages have been deleted, facts and figures updated, but the assertive, sometimes cantankerous, often self-righteous flavour of the original has been preserved. Sir Stanley's nephew Philip contributes an epilogue on recent changes in publishing, and throughout, whenever the views of his uncle need a contemporary gloss or a note of dissent, he provides these with passages of his own in square brackets. So the book is a hybrid, offering the stereoscopic pleasure of two perspectives on publishing at the same time.

The book, however, was not written as a literary curiosity, but to initiate outsiders into the mysteries of the trade. Judged as a guide to contemporary publishing practice, it is only a partial success. It does indeed contain a vast store of information about every stage in the publishing process and is full of sturdy common sense, but the character and age of the author and the spatch-cocked nature of the present version means that the emphases are sometimes wrong or the conclusions misleading. It's the truth about publishing, but hardly the whole truth.

For a start, Sir Stanley's attitude towards his authors, the belief that he was conferring a privilege in allowing their works

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to appear under his imprint, represents an unregenerate paternalism that happily is now disappearing from general publishing, though it is still to be found among the more fusty specialised houses and university presses. Philip Unwin speaks in his introduction of his uncle's 'tone of omniscient schoolmaster, strict and benevolent'. And the book is full of injunctions to authors which have the ring of commandments: thou shalt not disturb thy publisher with telephone calls if a postcard will serve; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's advances, nor commit adultery with thy neighbour's publisher. The late Jonathan Cape hailed this book as 'the Publisher's Bible'; the Old Testament might be more apt. There is an underlying complacency in the way Sir Stanley writes about the industry which also now seems questionable. Sir Stanley himself had plenty to be proud about. Proverbially mean in his own business, he was notably generous in the time and energy he gave to the book trade. The growth of British publishing in the post-war years, especially the great expansion of the export trade, owes a lot to his missionary zeal. But as usual there is a reverse side of the coin.

British publishing may be richer than ever before – more books published, higher turnover – but in many different ways the quality of publishing has deteriorated. When Sir Stanley was writing his first edition, books were regularly published in three months from delivery of typescript. Today an author is lucky if his book is published in less than a year; many wait longer. In 1926 you could order a title from a bookseller and expect delivery the following day. Now you may wait anything from a week to a month for a hardback and indefinitely for an individual paperback, since the booksellers can no longer order single copies. Diminished efficiency is to be found in almost every part of publishing – sloppy editing, poorer standards of production, less dependable accounts. Despite the bigger profits of publishers, authors' earnings, as monitored by the Society of Authors, have actually been declining in real terms in the last two decades.

Good publishing seems to demand bosses who impose their stamp on an imprint. Stanley Unwin was one such, another was Victor Gollancz, and Sir William Collins, who died two months ago, was a third. There are still such men around – Lord Weidenfeld and Andre Deutsch are in this mould – but in one house after another, as mergers and takeovers produce larger, more cumbersome units, the personality gives way to the faceless manager. Investment in market research and the proliferation of committees have not improved the quality of decision-making: they have made for safer, slower, duller choices – in a word, entropy.

It isn't fair to blame it all on the conglomerates. Market forces themselves have helped to put a premium on strictly commercial values. Books have a shorter life as the cost of warehousing and of overdrafts force publishers to remainder or pulp the slower selling titles. The rise in printing and paper costs, the public's resistance to higher prices and the cutback in library budgets have all militated against risk-taking. Genre books flourish; merchandising is another game that pays; the latter-day Miltons, if they exist, are more likely than ever to blush unseen.

This will probably be the last time *The Truth* will be refurbished, though one day some enterprising reprint publisher may bring back a facsimile of the first edition for popular amusement. The publishing industry is changing too fast; yesterday's truths are today's irrelevancies. Sir Stanley wrote as a medium-sized independent publisher – a dying breed – and the books he chose to publish, non-fiction hardbacks, are increasingly for libraries and carriage trade only; more and more, it is the mass-market paperback publisher who is calling the tune.

And there is at the moment another cloud on the horizon of British publishers – a long way off, but slightly larger than a man's hand – which could in the coming decade devastate the publishing scene as we know it today. The anti-trust action brought by the US Department of Justice against a score of American publishers, however remote and technical it may have seemed to the outsider, was a missile aimed at some of the richest pastures of British publishers, those crucial markets in the Commonwealth which Sir Stanley had done so much to foster, and which account for a third of all British books sold. The settlement of the action took place while this book was being printed: its full impact will not be known for some while. But if American competition in these territories becomes fierce, the next truth about publishing will be a lot less cheerful than the present one.

Matthew Coady

Fate's Plaything

Memoirs 1897-1914: The Time has Come . . . the Young Man Said by DENNIS WHEATLEY *Hutchinson* £4.95

The front of the dust-jacket bears a photograph, taken two world wars away, of a jauntily-capped nautical cadet. The arms are folded, the eyes expectantly wide. From the back, a best-selling novelist, hand on chin, grey at the temples, faces his public with a glance at once knowing and quizzical. Dennis Wheatley, who was 80 this month, sets out to tell how one turned into the other. Here, in the first of five volumes of memoirs, are the years up to his 17th birthday in 1914. Two decades have to pass before the marathon word-spinner emerges to capture the unflagging admiration of the crowds, if not the critics. It is here, nonetheless, that one looks for that moment when the future strikes, for that point of crisis which somehow made inevitable the torrent of tales about the Scarlet Impostor, the Wanton Princess, the Eunuch of Stamboul, the Black Baroness, the Satanist and the rest. Together, translated into 29 languages, they were to make him nearly a million pounds. The naval cadet was to complete a voyage, in its fashion more perilous than Sinbad's – the voyage to success.

Perhaps the date of departure was that far away Saturday when a copy of *Chums*, price a penny, proved more alluring than sweets in a South London shop. The cover, on which menacing redskins crept up behind unsuspecting settler seated on a tree, is imprinted still on an old man's memory. So is the anger of his father, a Mayfair wine merchant, who tore the paper from young hands, condemned it as trash, upbraided nanny for buying it, and threw it on the fire. The act may have owed more to parental brooding on genetics than on juvenile reading matter. Father's dread, he was to disclose years later, was that Dennis, undisciplined, might follow the path of Uncle Johnny, whose ways of idleness, extravagance and drunkeness ended in sad exile in Brittany and death from dropsy.

For an uncomprehending small boy, the *Chums* episode left a 'festering sore' not to be healed for many years. Mr Wheatley, conscious of the harshness of the punishment, suspects it may have made him a bibliophile ('I cannot have spent less than £10,000 on books'). For him, numerology provides the key to all that has happened: and a great deal did. He has seen active service in France, had a flourishing career in the wine business, served on Churchill's war planning staff and been entertainer to the world. He tries to demonstrate that his life has been dominated by the numeral eight. This means, he says, in the fustian manner of his characters, 'that I am one of the playthings of Fate'. There could be other explanations. That scene in the family sitting room, in which the flames conceal for ever the ending of the adventure story,

'You don't know what you're talking about!'

'Oh yes, I do. I've read the White Paper right through.'

HMSO BOOKS

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has a tingling seminal quality. So also has the moment when he is savagely thrashed by the clergyman headmaster of his Margate prep. school for having abandoned a Latin primer for the heady pleasures of a highwayman romance. Both occasions are full of pain, if not cruelty. It was as though he had caught, through childhood's eyes, a glimpse of the landscape he was one day to make his own and had found the way barred. When his first novel was published it was called *The Forbidden Territory*.

If the Wheatley canon, souped up though it often is with sex and the occult, echoes the boys' adventure yarn, it also reflects a dated world of officers and gentlemen. Such figures save Britain from revolution, give an approving nod when Reds go to the gallows without trial and rub shoulders with the great. They cross the class divide of which he was conscious as a boy aboard *HMS Worcester* in 1912. He would never have believed, he tells us, even if the Archangel Gabriel had whispered it, that 'one of my step-sons was to marry a Princess'. Such visions were a world away from the middle-class boyhood in which girls in floppy hats were pursued across Streatham Common. There were, though, other instincts at work, including one 'which has always led me to secure, as far as I possibly could, the best in food, wine, clothes and everything which for many centuries was regarded as exclusive to the aristocracy'.

If the great popular storytellers – Dumas, Conan Doyle, Anthony Hope and the Baroness Orczy – captured his imagination, so did the life-style of his father's customers in and about Grosvenor Square. Was the novel writing, then, no more than a means? His yearning for the luxuries of success suggest the answer. Yet, tucked away in his account of schooldays at Dulwich (from which he was expelled and which he loathes even now), holidays at Brighton, and life as an apprentice vintner in the Kaiser's Germany, there is a brief, wistful confession. To have created Musketeer, Pimpernel or Ruritania, he admits, would have given him a 'genuine fame', and a satisfaction deeper than anything he himself has achieved as a writer. In this, at least, the bland, worldly man on the back of the dust-jacket has failed the bright-eyed boy on the front. For the young cadet, one feels, the 'best' of everything has not somehow been enough.

Valentine Cunningham

Label Talk

The Thomas Berryman Number by JAMES PATTERSON *Secker & Warburg* £3.90
English Short Stories of Today, Fourth Series selected by Roger Sharock *Oxford for the English Association* £2.50
Dream Children by GAIL GODWIN *Gollancz* £4.50

Fiction wheezes in the New Year. For his part, the wheezes James Patterson goes in for steadily rebut any notion of novelty. Indeed, the frisson of his efficiently drummed-up account of a newsman discovering that the schizo everybody thought bumped off Nashville's black mayor (the suspect was himself promptly and conveniently gunned down by a State Trooper) was not the actual killer, depends on your enjoying the analogies. Analogies that are pressed on you at every turn, with constant references to Martin Luther King and J.F.K. 'Where Are You Lee Harvey Oswald Now That We Need You?' sings a 12-year-old's button on page 179 – in case any dimmer 12-year-old in the audience had managed to miss the connection.

Still, the novel doubling as cinema script – which this one tries to be – can't afford to let the moguls miss the tricks. And how the movie parallels, not to say opportunities, are loud-pedalled. 'It's a Sam Peckinpah kind of story'; 'She reminded me of Anthony Perkins at the end of *Psycho*'; 'He was Jon Voigt on the skids'; 'Very Alfred Hitchcock'; 'would have been perfect for Costa-Gavras movies'. The writing – at least the stills (of Maria Schneider; of *Last Picture Show* Western towns) – is heavy-mittedly disposed about the walls of the characters' rooms. Of their subconsciouses too: the real gunman's moll, a girl called Oona (no less) with such nice parents that our news-hound lets them off pseudonymously, has dreams in 'fast motion, then Richard Avedon-type shots of herself and Berryman' – the shootist – 'in assorted cinematic disaster scenes'.

Doubtless the industry will buy it even if readers dither. Buying it, for that matter, is almost all that this none-too-subtle fiction allows its bit-part people by way of clarification – it can scarcely be dubbed characterisation. It's no surprise to find that the author is employed by 'a leading New York advertising agency'. Most conspicuously his style consumes conspicuous consumers: it sees the label beneath the outer skin. If, of course, an adman can't spot a Florsheim tie, a Carousel projector, Nieman-Marcus boots, or a tan Mercedes 450SE convertible when his characters have got them, who may? And since everyone comes, on this account, in little more than their duds ('was wearing a blue muslin shirt with a red butterfly design on the back. With pearl snaps': 'was dressed in dark burgundy and gold: a feathered burgundy hat, silk jumpsuit, calfskin boots, a variety of gold bracelets, rings and earrings'; 'he had a prescription for 20 milligrams of Stelazine in the pocket of his peach nik-nik shirt'), this intense scrutiny of clothing must stand in for the omitted social and psychological depth. Not that the southern investigator, Ochs, lacks for personal interest, nor that the dirt he digs up – who that 'State Trooper' really was; which disgruntled politico did all the hiring – is short on engrossment either. But all in all everything feels in the end simply too superficial, a scanted picture of the southern States that in general and in detail looks, even from here (particularly as to all those Nadines and Bobby Sues and their sexual preferences in the backs of Lincolns), too predictable and bogus for belief.

Looking back is done better by the OUP's latest series of *English Short Stories of Today*: 'today' is taken by editor Roger Sharrock legitimately to embrace even an Updike tale of 1959. Most of his selection comes from the Sixties, only a handful from the Seventies. He talks, in his preface, of 'exciting development' in the form but innovation is scarcely evinced by his choices (in fact he specifically excludes 'the anti-stories and surrealist fantasies of the last few years', and is cautiously waiting for the 'smoke to clear' from the 'impact' –

Roy Fuller

The Sloth Moth

One riddle of being solved, at least! The moth
That seemed to spend its whole life on the sloth
(Feeding perhaps on fur or sweat or spit)
Fell under suspicion when no trace of it
In either egg or larval form could be
Descried in the fur. From a sloth in captivity
Moths were removed, their eggs were hatched, and lo!
The larvae would not feed upon the slow
Animal's hide, nor even on leaves from trees
That sloths inhabit. The only food to please
Was sloth dung. With that clue, biologists
Soon found (through half-obscuring brush and mists)
Among the pellets on the forest floor
Silk tubes that larvae spin! They, when mature,
Pupate in the dung pile, then the fresh-hatched moths
Fly up (to seek and settle on new sloths)
Towards the sun-coined forest canopy.
Thus it turns out the parasite must see
Its host as little more than one providing
Convenient dung and only riding, riding,
So as to be at hand when (sluggish in these
As all their motions) weekly the sloths descend the trees.

The poem is largely indebted to a report in The Times *from Nature-Times News Service, the source being* Science, *9 July 1976.*

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odd impact that – of Borges). But with almost all the world before him (and 'English' is interpreted hereabouts with the customary colonising arrogance of 'English Literature' syllabuses, as meaning anything written in English, whether by Irishmen, Americans, Canadians, Algerians, South Africans, or whoever) he could hardly miss making up an enticing grab-bag – and emphasising that for quality in short stories we are actually less for formal innovativeness (the abbreviation of the form allows so little room for that) than for more of the well-established same. And how variously good, on this re-reading of favourite authors, do Susan Hill, Bernard Malamud, Olivia Manning, V. S. Naipaul, Jean Rhys, Elizabeth Taylor, Kingsley Amis, Patrick White, strike one as being. What's astounding is that the excluded – there's no V. S. Pritchett, no Mary Lavin, no Nadine Gordimer, no Wesker, no Nabokov, no Joyce Carol Oates, to name no others – are just as good. This bustling form is, as Sharrock rightly insists, certainly 'not in a period of decline'.

Also omitted from Sharrock's gatherum is Gail Godwin, whose handiness in the medium is – despite her occasional spurts into whimsy, especially over matters mystical – plentifully illustrated by her new collection. Her mixture makes a nice blend of concern over women's plights (hysterectomies, second marriages, alienation from the sink, habituated husbands, randy uncles, prying lovers), traces of Catholic guilts, interest in religious inspirations and a feeling for the bookish life (her people are writers, professors of Old English, students at the BM). She's also – like her Gretchen, adulator of the O.E. prof – surer of Borges than Sharrock is, and whiffs of experiment (more *voulu* than brought off, I fear) are in the air. Engagingly, her people have (like Joyce and Borges, Gretchen points out) worries over their eyesight; and the bookish men like clinching with Glumdalclitch: 'a nine-year-old girl, 40 feet high' in 'Why does a Great Man Love'; the lumbering product of a petite critic and novelist in 'The Women Who Kept Her Poet'. Big people, and a decent-sized talent.

Wolf Biermann

Brecht, Your Posterity

you that will emerge from the deluge in which we drowned . . .

Those on whom you founded your hope
With the same hopes as yours they founder
Those who one day were to do better than you
Make the others' cause look better and better
And in those bleak times have settled down
Snugly and snugly to live with your poems
Those with a furrow between the eyes
Those with their ears blocked
Those with their tongues nailed down

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

Broken bits, dreams laid out in front of me
Rubble, expectations piled up in front of me
Refuse of earlier passions they dish up for me
Stale left-overs of earlier anger they pour out for me
Strew on my head the ashes of earlier fires
Sparse remains hang on that armchair facing me
Branded with the stamp of bureaucracy
Clamped into the thumb-screws of privileges
Chewed up and spat out by the political police

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

And are as though blind with the darkness around them
And are as though deaf with the silence around them
And are as though dumb with the daily shouts of victory
To inflict ever more subtle pains and
Endure, that's what they have learnt and
Are far still from having reached the
Bottom of the great pot of bitterness
Are far from having eaten up
The bottomless supplies of greasy poverty

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

Romantic flotsam too is washed up for me
Metaphor-dripping driftwood of the revolution
On brass plates as ever the great names
Of the 19th century. From the wreckage even one
Can construe the ship. The submerged planks tell
Of the drowned crew. The rotten hemp
Still blathers about the ship-taming ropes
Yes, they've emerged from the deluge in which
You went down and now can see no land

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

Those too, master, are – and in prose – your
Posterity: post-deceased pre-deceased people
Full of indulgence only for themselves
Changing convictions more often than their shoes
That's right: their voices are no longer hoarse
– since they have nothing more to say
Their features are no longer distorted, right:
For they have grown faceless. At least
Man has become to wolf a wolf

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

If finally then the guests, drunk with the misleading
Truth of my ballads, inflamed also by the false logic
Of my poems, if they go, armed with confidence, then

I stay behind: ash of my fires. Then
I stand there: a raided arsenal. And
Knocked out I hang in the strings of my guitar.

And I have no voice any more and no face
And am as though deaf with speaking and blind with looking
And am afraid of my fear and am

Brecht, your posterity
From time to time they
punish
me.

translated by Michael Hamburger

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Cut-Ups

Two-Minute Warning *Plaza 1*
Sweeney! *ABC 2, Shaftesbury Avenue*
Carrie *Leicester Square Theatre*
Battle of Midway *Empire*
The Moon Over the Alley *Gaumont, Notting Hill Gate till Saturday*

Larry Peerce has made such a mixed bag of films, including *Goodbye, Columbus*, the Liz Taylor face-lift *Ash Wednesday* and the weepie *A Window to the Sky*, settled insecurely around the real-life problems of an American girl skier who broke her back in training for the Olympics, that he – Mr Peerce – remains something of a mystery: a professional of a kind but of what kind? Does he bring them in on time? Is he good with certain actors? Has he an authorial note? Questions like this often hover distractingly in the reviewer's head. After all, we keep hearing that directors matter. Ever since someone cried *'auteur'*, there has been pressure on the viewer to spot what distinguishes one of them from the other. *Two-Minute Warning* brings you back to the fact that cinema is a business operation most of the time, closer to war than art. Its equivocal success as entertainment owes more to a grasp of logistics than to anything higher and finer.

It is another disaster movie, in essence, with the mandatory in-built cameos. There is this big American football game boiling up at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, whither wend their two-dimensional ways a young married couple with kids, a pickpocket, a gambler due to die if his team doesn't win, a priest who holds his hand, a police captain – and a sniper. The resulting event, which sustains attention without rewarding it, is fashionably shot. From the opening, overhead, circling look at the stadium to the bleak end, also *à la mode* (downbeat and Altmanesque), it comes on with unwarranted authority, impressing by its chic and tantalising by its fragmentation. You might fairly say it is shot as if by that sniper, whose shoes, hands on a car-wheel, eye-view through the cross-hairs of a rifle are proffered *passim*, a cut-in tease. Several notable faces crop up and down: Charlton Heston is the reigning policeman, Holly, until John Cassavetes is called in as head of a SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics team); Walter Pidgeon is summoned to appear as the suave pickpocket; David Janssen rows with his none-too-young girlfriend, Gena Rowlands; and the excellent Martin Balsam is squatly present as the stadium manager. The mayor is in the vast crowd and the president of the US is en route. It is that sort of occasion. A pulse ought to beat behind the mounting, or anyway mounted, vignettes. As it is, the sense is of manipulation and an artificial tension. Everything is at once a shade too aleatory and a touch too planned: and all under angled photography – by Gerald Hirschfeld – of colour-magazine gloss and definition.

As a display of what can be done and risked in current terms of cutting and cynical dialogue and big-scale crowd panics, *Two-Minute Warning* is exemplary and even carries a grey moral: the sniper is reduced to a bloodied carcase and his motives never discovered. The Cassavetes character says he'll be a two-week wonder in the media and people will criticise the cops for killing him. Balsam sits in anguish in the emptied stadium. The Americans have a problem with guns, unique in the world. But – aside from the great expertise that went to the finale, of herds of spectators fighting to avoid random bullets – a corniness resides in the memory. Walter Pidgeon and the rest were only sketched in to be sitting ducks, or targets. 'Shit,' says the president, as his car is warned off ('We have to abort our arrival,' explains an aide): and the echo lingers. It is just more evil news, a choreographed much ado about nothing. Unreason rules, to make a roaming holiday for spectators.

David Wickes has been entrusted with translating *Sweeney!* from the small screen, where Detective-Inspector Regan (John Thaw) and his side-kick, Sergeant Carter (Dennis Waterman), have presented a grimier image of our domestic Flying Squad in action, a very far cry from Jack Warner avuncularly tipping his helmet and advising us to mind how we go. This spin-off goes reeling in all directions and ties in with the anonymous, mosaic, modish procedures of Mr Peerce. The idea seems to be to set up a fearsome flak of jump-out non-sequiturs, whatever – as they said a year or so ago – grabs you. I am old-fashioned enough to prefer something less showy (exceptions made for Robert Altman, Bob Rafelson and one or two other interestingly itinerant American mavericks): *Five Easy Pieces*, perhaps, but not when they go missing at the conclusion. Regan and Carter are here promoted as mid-Atlantic versions of their TV selves, awash with booze, swishing round a travelogue London that looks left over from that dire John Wayne outing, the down-here-on-a-visit *Brannigan*, where buses took deeply improbable routes and the plot incredible turns. Likewise, the Sweeney-men find themselves up to their armpits in a script by Ranald Graham, entailing a corrupted Energy Minister (Ian Bannen), his press-aide McQueen (Barry Foster), call-girls, and Oil (the gimmick). No great sheikhs, though there are moments that intimate a future for Mr Wickes when he forgets about the international market.

Brian de Palma's *Carrie* will, all too probably, be enlisted as a further, firmly signed item in the canon by his premature aficionados. From where I sat, anyone with the requisite everyday expertise and vulgarity could have made it. From the pre-credit sequence, with its titular heroine – a freckled high-school lass – feeling herself up under a phallic gym shower and subsequently having her first period, blood down the leg, to the mocking response of her fellow-girleens (most of whom would pass for 20-plus outside a cinema), one knows one is in for something. Carrie, fetchingly impersonated by Sissy Spacek, proves to be it: a wretched telekinetic with a mad, religious ma (Piper Laurie!) who has deformed her via a nutty hatred for men and their parts. The telekinesis, for the uninitiated, means that Carrie can move any object, mother comprised, at will: light bulbs pop, ashtrays break, ultimately a Senior Prom explodes, knives fly, a house burns, closing the incident, or accident. A bucket of pig's blood furnishes heavy relief. The editing style is essentially staccato, wild, as meaningless and contemporary as the impressionism of Peerce and Wickes.

Battle of Midway deploys Sensurround, which is an irritating way of shaking an auditorium to no purpose – a bit like Carrie having a field day. That Jack Smight, once a name to raise hopes, engineered this 'epic', a crash-by-crash reconstruction of a famous victory (June 1942, a tiny Pacific atoll), is lowering. Henry Fonda, Robert Mitchum, Glenn Ford, Toshiro Mifune and fellow-octogenarians make stoic token appearances amid the burning planes and multiple flare-ups. What *is* this disaster-path moviemakers are so set on? Against it, put *The Moon Over the Alley*, a home-hatched curate's egg about to leave the area it was made in: Joseph Despins's Weillish semi-musical, with songs by Galt MacDermot and extraordinarily uneven performances from lodging-house folk, a few of them startlingly conceived and achieved. BFI money backed it: I wish I could forward it more wholeheartedly.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Daddy's Girl

As Engels delivered his oration at the funeral of Karl Marx, two gravediggers leaned against a nearby tree, eating their sandwiches and offering their bored profiles to a BBC-2 audience who would not, they seemed to hope, be slow to note the irony – that it was for the likes of them that old Karl had etc. etc. *Eleanor Marx* is a three-part screen biography and has the not easy task of packing a lot in whilst spelling a lot out; too often, though, one was made aware of a certain simple-mindedness at work, both in the précis department and in the actual telly-strategies. For instance, you could have laid bets that Engels, oration done, would take aside the tearful Tussy

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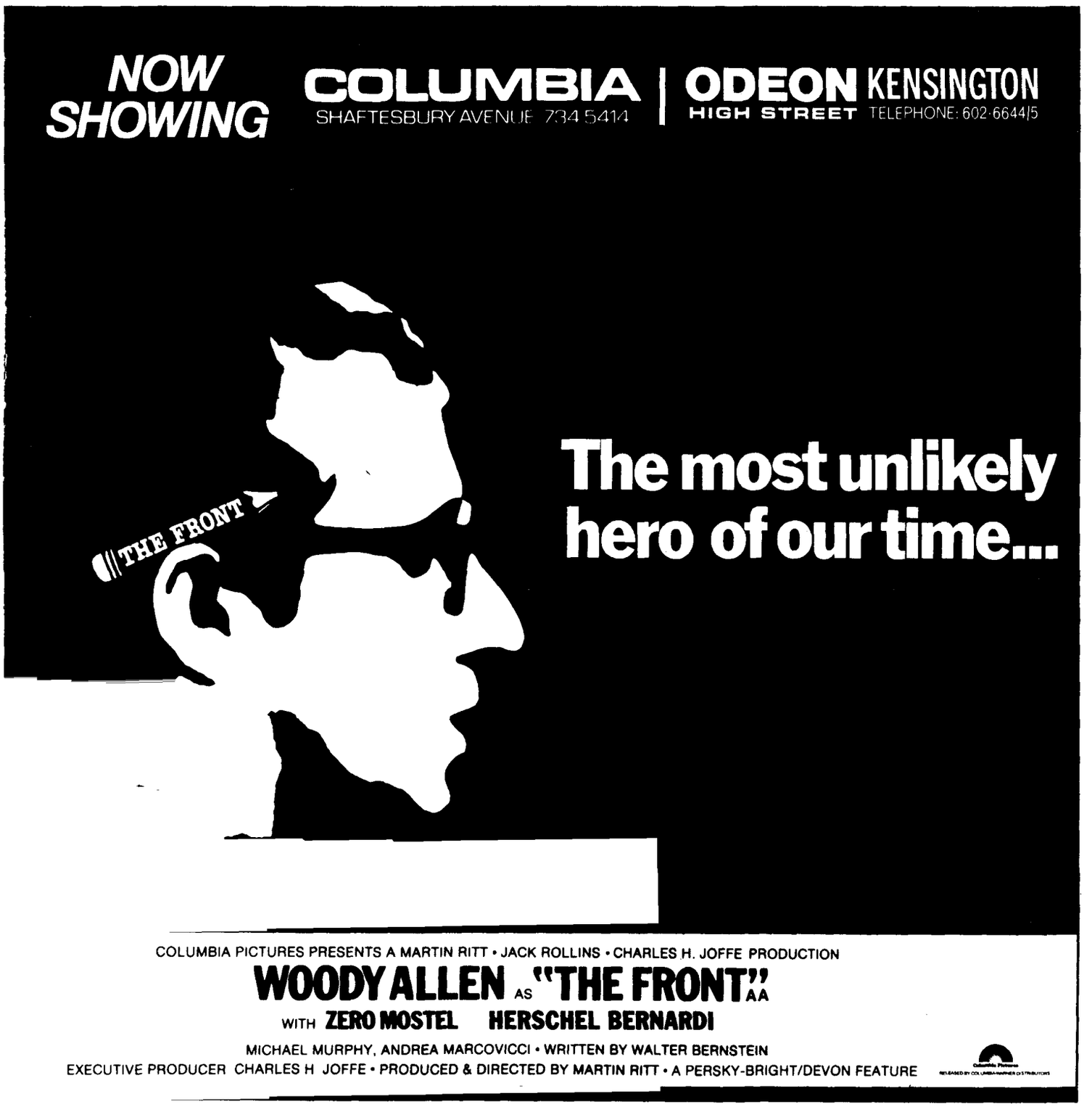
and inform her that the old man had depended on *her* 'to carry on the revolution in this rotten country' and – when that didn't raise an idealistic smile – to clinch things with the historic quote 'But Tussy is me' This does it, and we at once melt laughingly back into that famous full-of-laughter childhood, with Lee Montague fondly rasping out a Marxist fairy tale to the stunningly pretty four-year-old Naomi Gohar

Much of the first episode is occupied with establishing the rich impoverishment of Tussy's early years in London Daddy used to take her out on to the Heath and they would both stare pensively up at their red kite and then frolic chortlingly home to face a bit of nagging about bills 'We can't live on bread and potatoes, Karl Can't you get work?' '*Zis* (pointing at *Das Kapital*) ees my werk' Zee first part would have been completed long ago eef it hadn't been for zees petty bourgeois grabbing after money!' Points of this kind made, there would be poetry and play readings in which Tussy's later attraction to the stage could be seen taking early root And politics? Well, not so easy Marx and Engels would begin some weighty wrangle and be instantly dispatched to the far corner of our screens so that in the foreground Mrs Marx could tell her child and us about their forebears. Genealogy complete, there would be a brief lull in which we'd hear the thinkers roar 'No concessions to nationalism!' or something of the sort and then they would sternly be called back for some more family play. Goodhumouredly, they would concur; warmly human, they were content to have let us know that stuff like this *did* get talked about from time to time, but not at anyone's expense.

Similar methods are employed later on when Tussy becomes embroiled in her secretarial labours. Marx doesn't need to break off from the penning of his mighty works when obliged to engage in helpfully plot-advancing talk. This is about as near as we get to being given direct evidence of the old man's intellectual power, so that when he gets grumpy and Burl Ives-ish at the dinner table everyone's deference seems patronising, and he seems just another overbearing dad who can't bear to see his 'princess' hitched up to a frog. Can't blame him, actually, given the pallid performance turned in by the two Commune veterans who come to woo his girls – both Janet Amsden as Jenny and Jennie Stoller as Eleanor have clearly been heavily briefed on the Marx sisters'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passionate natures and they spare us not a blazing eye nor a bubble of awakening vitality. Good therefore to see the cad Aveling make a dampening first appearance in the last scene; the excellent Alan Dobie will surely do him proud.

Another Bouquet (Thames) is a sequel to the successful *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire*. I never saw the original but I'm told it was full of some pretty steamy cross-pollination. Little wonder, perhaps, that the characters in this follow-up look so burnt-out and bewildered; their dialogue is used throughout to interrupt uncomfortable silences. Not knowing exactly which pause was more pregnant than any other, I took to idly transcribing the text and then to imagining what it would look like if set out as drama on the page. It looks like this:

Good to see you again.
Glad you came.
Are you really?
Of course.
It's silly but now you're here I don't know what to say to you.
I know. I feel the same.
Do you . . . want to stay for supper?
Um . . .
This is . . . still your home.
Is it?
If you want it to be.

And so on. More eloquent stretches, I should say, include thoroughly tried gems like: 'I need to be alone and yet it frightens me', 'I want to live with you again before I forget how to live with anyone', 'You worry me when you talk like that' and 'I need time to adjust, that's all'. According to the credits the script was written by a human, but I can't believe that even telly still wastes money in that way.

John Coleman last week rightly praised the dramatised documentary *Fear on Trial* which was shown here a few weeks ago. In the same vein last Saturday we had *Guilty or Innocent – the Sam Shephard Murder Case* (LWT). Again, the sheer length of the thing was crucial to a mainly court-bound drama; no cheap elisions had to be resorted to, and we were unmockingly invited to make up our own minds on the evidence available. Usually, with such invitations, the evidence just isn't there. In this case, a painstaking leisureliness prevailed, and I was confidently able to pin the rap on Sam's old mum. George Peppard played Sam, and came perilously close to showing us that he can act.

A final word about this week's *World in Action* (Granada), in which rugged economist Roger Opie spent a wretched half hour being cornered by a snarling housewife. Maddened by rising prices (she'd bought a freezer and had nothing to put in it) she didn't want to hear Opie's explanatory 'figures': 'You sit in an office and you don't know what the mass of people are thinking. I don't even agree with you and I'm an individual.' Opie desperately tried the 'yep . . . yep . . . yep' method which many intellectuals, I notice, nowadays fall back on when engulfed by the invective of ordinary types, but she wouldn't permit him an opening to pounce on. And what's more, she had an Alf Garnett hubby in reserve. That office, those figures; I hope he got home safely and won't ever do a silly thing like that again.

Short Story

Nadine Gordimer

For Dear Life

Swaying along in the howdah of her belly I make procession up steep streets. The drumming of her heart exalts me; I do not know the multitudes. Thumb-hookah-ed, I pass among them unseen and unseeing behind the dancing scarlet brocades of her blood. From time to time I am lurched to rest. Habituation to the motion causes me to move: as if the hidden presence raps testy impatience. They place their hands to read a sign from where there is no cognition of their existence.

A wall-eyed 25-year-old with a knitted cap jumps back into the trench in a cheerful bound. Others clamber stockily, with the dazed open mouth of labourers and the scowl of sweat. Their work-clothes are cast-off pinstripe pants brought in rumpled bundles from Tunis and Algiers. Closely modelled to their heads and growing low, straight across their foreheads, their kind of hair is a foreign headgear by which they see themselves known even if they do not speak their soft, guttural, prophet's tongue. One has gold in his mouth, the family fortune crammed into crooked teeth. Another is emaciated as a beggar or wise man, big feet in earth-sculpted boots the only horizontal as his arms fly up with the pick. Eyes like clowns' with floury dust look up from the ditch just at the level where the distortion of the female body lifts a tent of skirt to show the female thighs. She's a young one. Mending roads and laying sewage pipes through the French resort over more than a year, they have seen her walking with the man who wanted her, in pursuit, hunting her even while he and she walked side by side, with his gilt-buckled waist, his handbag manacled to his wrist, his snake's skin-snug shirt showing sportsman shoulders, his satyr's curly red hair, thin on top, creeping down the back of his neck and breast-bone, glinting after her along with his eyes and smile.

Like the other women in this country, she was not for them. She did not nod at them then and the mouth parted now as she's approaching is not the beginning of the greeting she has for the postman or any village crone. She's simply panting under her eight-month burden: in there, foreman, overseer, *patron* like the one who will come by any minute to make sure they are not idling.

Here – feel it?

Concentrate on the drained Capuccino cups spittled with chocolate-flecked foam. The boom of the jukebox someone's set in motion seems to be preventing . . . as if it were a matter of hearing, through the palm!

Give me your hand –

A small-change clink as silver bracelets move with volition surrendered.

There. *There*. Lower down, that's it – now you *must* be able to.

But was it not always something impossible to detect from outside . . . So long ago: tapping, plucking (yes, that was much more like it) – plucking at one's flesh from within as fingers fidget pleating cloth. If I were the one you were inside, I should feel you. You would be unmistakeable. You would be unlike the children he had or the children I had. You are a girl because he had no girl. His daughter with his stiff-legged walk (heron-legs, I used to say) and my bottom (bob-tail, he used to say) and his oval nails and fine white skin behind the ears. You can crack your knee and ankle joints. Tealeaves tinsel the grey of your irises. Like him, like me. You have our face; when we used to see ourselves as a couple in the mirror of a lift that was carrying us clandestinely.

The doctor says they suck their thumbs in the womb. Sucks its thumb!

As if the doctor were a colleague the husband confirms with a nod, gazing assessingly at the majestic mound that rises out of the level of water in the bath. Like many people without a profession he has a magazine-article amateur's claim to knowledge in many.

My boy's been shown what life is all about from when he wasn't more than an infant in arms. No sweets, look at the state my teeth are in. You'll finish schoo whatever happens. That's all very fine, earn ing enough to buy yourself a third-hanc Porsche 'C' '59 at 19 but at 34 you find your self selling TV sets on commission, during a recession. No running around the summe streets, 12 years old and ought to be asleep at night. No chasing girls, catching them squeezing their little breasts on the darl porch of the old church before it was pulled down. Steer clear of married women wh keep you in bed, spoilt bitches, while thei husbands get on in the world and buy th Panther Westwinds de Ville, modelled afte the Bugatti Royal, best car ever made Onassis had one, and Purdy guns, gol cigarette lighters, camera equipment, boat with every comfort (bar, sauna) you coul even live on, for instance if you couldn get a rent-controlled flat. Great lover, bu the silk shirts and real kid boots from Ital don't last long when you're hanging aroun bars looking for work and all you ge offered is the dirty jobs the Arabs are her to do. No smoking, either; bad enough tha your mother and I mess up our lungs, 2 per cent reduction of life-expectancy, the say. You'll have more sense or I'll kno why. You're lucky. Women love red hai a well-known sign of virility. You'll fly fir class with free champagne. You'll fill forms: 'Company Director'. You'll do ' I say. If you aren't given Coca Cola taste, you won't miss it.

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Feel – my belly's so hard. I'm like a rock.

She does not know the name, but she is thinking of a geodite halved, in a shop window; a cave of crystals, a star cracked open. In there, curved as a bean, the wonder of her body blindly gazes.

How long to go?

It is an old woman's form of greeting. Her stiff dog stands with his front paws on the kitchen window and watches the heads below that come into view and pass. He lifts his nose slightly, as at a recollection, when a boy clatters from the baker's to the hotel with a headdress of loaves. Beside the dog she looks down at a dome under which sandalled feet show, like the cardboard feet of one of those anthropomorphic balloon toys, and above which a bright, smooth face smiles up at her with the kindly patronage of the young.

It can't be long, for her. Every day, when she and the dog manage to get as far as the front door step to sit down in a series of very slow movements in the sun at noon, you can count the breaths left.

He will stand behind a desk in his Immigration Officer's uniform and stamp how long they can stay and when they must go. He will drive up in his big car that rises and sinks on its soft springs in the dust as a bird settles upon water, and not bother to get out, giving orders through the window to the one among them who understands the language a little better than the others.

No one will know who you are; not even you.

Only we, who are forgetting each other, will know who you never were.

Even possibilities pass.

I don't cry and I don't bleed.

My daughter wanted for nothing. I bought a Hammond organ on instalments because she's so musical. (Since she was a ittle thing.) She could have gone to a good convent although we're not religious. Right, she wanted a car, I got her a car and she drove around without a licence: I warned her. The boys were crazy for her; her mother talked to her. She looked like 18 at 14 with that figure and that beautiful curly red hair. You don't see anything like it, usually it all comes out of a bottle. I won't have her making herself cheap. She could go to study at the university or take up beauty culture. There's money in that. If anyone lays a finger on her –

The emaciated ditch-digger weeps sometimes as he digs. It is on Mondays that the fight occurs among them, when he is suffering from the drink their religion forbids. His brother has committed suicide in Marseilles knowing the sickness of the genitals he had was punishment for offending Allah by going with a white whore.

It is summer round the empty house in the fields the family left two generations ago. They can't go back, except to picnic as tourists who bring their cheese and wine and ashamed little caches of toilet paper on to anyone's property. There's no electricity and there's water only in a well. They spray the old vines once a year, and once a year come for the grapes. Cows from neighbouring farms stare from the grass with their calves.

I lean in the solid shadow of the mother's body, against her flanks.

To those who have already lived, an empty house is unimaginable. They build it only out of what has been placed by the hands of man: from the bricks that enclose space to the rugs put down and curtains drawn there, once – how can there be *nobody*? The ornamental wooden valance that is breaking away from the eaves is the blows of the grandfather who nailed it. The Virgin with a cake-doily gilt lace halo under glass is the bedroom faith of a grandmother. An old newspaper is the eyes of one who read it.

When I vacate this first place I'll leave behind the place that was all places. I'll leave behind nothing. There will be *nothing* – for I'm taking all with me, I'm taking it on . . . all, all, everything. In my swollen sex, obscene for my size, in my newly-pressed-into-shape cranium containing the seed-pearls of my brain cells, in my minute hands creased as bank-notes or immigration papers.

Head down, shoving, driven, meeting violence with violence, casting myself out like Jonah from the heaving host whale, bursting lungs that haven't breathed yet, swimming for dear life . . .

I don't see them covering their eyes in secret, I don't hear them wailing: It will all be gone through again!

Behind me, the torn membranes of my moorings.

Hauled from the deeps where there is no light for sight I find eyes. The ancient Mediterranean sun smithereens against me like a joyous glass dashed to the ground.

Ta mère fit un pet foireux et tu naquis de sa coique.

I begin again.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Black Genesis

uHlanga *Royal Court, Theatre Upstairs*
Loaded Questions *King's Head*
The Point *Mermaid*

As we'll no doubt rediscover next week, when *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* comes back to the Royal Court proper, it is always difficult to criticise black South African work judiciously. Should we clack our tongues and shake our gory locks if an actor's awkwardness with his hands makes him look as if he's permanently on the point of turning right on a bicycle, or obsessively digging the audience in the stomach? Or are we to become all soft and forgiving, on the grounds that it is pernickety to find technical fault with first-person evidence from inside the cauldron itself? Neither extreme seems to me satisfactory, which is why I would, on the whole, prefer not to be reviewing the concatenation of tribal lore, black sociology and nationalist rage that has been called *uHlanga* by its devisers, Mshengu and James Mthoba. It is, by Sloane Square standards, rather amateurish. But then it is not aimed at English theatregoers, still less theatre critics. If anything, it's an exercise in what's nowadays known as 'consciousness-raising': from Soweto, and for Soweto, an earnest dialogue between oppressed and oppressed. The worst one can sensibly say of it is that it is in the wrong place.

But even that isn't quite true. It is, after all, interesting to eavesdrop on an alien culture, or, perhaps more accurately here, on a dispossessed people that is struggling to become a culture; and Mr Mthoba, all alone on the stage for the duration, often allows us to do that. He tells us that 'uHlanga' means 'reed' in a Zulu myth of creation strangely akin to that of Genesis. He offers us glimpses into an agrarian past, and then into an urban present, glumly populated by drunken husbands, small-time tycoons, and dissatisfied wage-slaves, doomed to spend their working lives commuting into the white man's parlour. More to the point, he gives us some idea of what articulate blacks in Mr Vorster's paradise are currently feeling, and currently presuming to say publicly that they are feeling:

> I no longer know where I am, I must be in the land of the dead, otherwise what could this darkness mean? . . . They say they brought Africa into history. I say they took us out of history. They robbed us of our past . . . Fuck you! You saw! Why didn't you *say* something . . . Talking for myself, I hate to hate, but how often has it been, I did not hate enough?

Yet this angry and ominous script is put over by a slight, smiling figure whose most truculent accusations totally lack venom and bite: a naturally nice young man (you feel) who has been forced by circumstances to be nasty, and finds the obligation extremely onerous. And that, too, is an interesting phenomenon.

Just about everything that has been alleged against *uHlanga* is true. It is ill-organised, imperfectly mimed, often hard to follow and sometimes dauntingly 'literary', stiff with sentences like 'music is a mask, a role, a camouflage to hide from you the painful brilliance of our humanity'. But even at its feeblest – when, for instance, Mr Mthoba is parodying public-school colonialists with shrill squawks of 'out for a duck' and 'spiffing, isn't it?' – it nudges

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something in us that perhaps ought to be regularly nudged. It's a sharp African elbow in our creaky English ribs, reminding us, yet again, that there are a lot of resentful people out there, with scant respect for our 'kith and kin'. Anyone who wishes to add an animated dimension to the flat newspaper reports from Soweto and the other embattled townships would profit from seeing it.

At the King's Head, three puzzled-looking people in evening dress stalk onstage, sit, and place manuscripts in the music stands in front of them. They are not, as it turns out, a string trio that has lost its instruments, but members of something called the Phantom Captain School of Thought, which (just to clarify) is 'the psychological division of the Phantom Captain Company'. Their job is to ask questions, more questions, and nothing but questions. How d'you do? Do you have any means of identification? What, briefly, is the secret of the universe? How would you explain to a blind man, tactfully, how to play blind man's buff? Are you showing promise yet? Do you have a good face for memories? Would you like to appear in *Who's Who* and, if so, as whom?

To the accompaniment of spectral music, and a formidable collection of faces, places and Daliesque oddities on an elevated cinema-screen, the grilling continues for some 100 minutes, taking in God, love, marriage, the police, children, the arts and a good deal else, and proving very much what the nattily-tooled inquisitors should have expected from the first. Questions can be prying, bullying, sinister, banal, gnomic, facetious, *num*, *ne* and *nonne*, in fact just about everything and anything. Does the word 'mother' make you feel the least bit uneasy? Is sex as good as the real thing? Do you realise you're free to leave at any time?

Yes, thank you. The questions were nicely delivered, and sometimes even nicely acted, but I decided that J. K. Galbraith might be asking more pertinent ones on BBC-2, and took advantage of this kind suggestion. Still, you can't be subjected to a thousand queries without catching something, and the memory of Harry Nilsson's rock musical at the Mermaid brings interrogation marks dancing into my eyes like liver spots.

What is the point of *The Point*? Is it to make money for Mr Miles's theatre? Or, as it pretends, to advertise the virtues of unorthodoxy? Or both? What, if anything, did the assembled children think of the sub-Swift country which banishes those who haven't points on their heads? What of the blunt-pated hero's sub-Carroll trip through the Pointless Forest? Were they amused or were they bored? Who knows, given that silence? And what did *I* think of it all? Did I like Wayne Sleep's dancing, or did I think he hadn't enough dancing to do? Did I enjoy the Rockman, who sang about being stoned, or did I prefer the Leafman, who was opening branches all over the forest? Was I awake or was I dreaming? Would I rather have been somewhere else or was I, in fact, somewhere else? What was that somewhere else? Who am I? Why do I write this column week after week? Do I need the money, like Mr Miles? Why don't I shut up?

Design

Drusilla Beyfus

Topping

Next time you pop a shiny pack of individually wrapped toffees into a paper bag, reflect that life is full of change. The packaging is now in question. Over in Brussels at the EEC there are the usual two views about it, theirs and ours. European officials want to control packaging, the British Government prefers a voluntary code.

Back home the debate continues both at grassroots and at high tables. The two protagonists, the producers and retailers on one side and the consumer/environmentalist lobby on the other, seem in danger of over-wrapping the real issues in pure new woolliness. Indeed, if the uncommitted are shopping around for convictions in the field it is rather like shopping in any other – full of easily sold arguments, attractively coloured facts and the hidden persuasions of half-truths.

Stung by the consumer lobby's attack on packaging as wasteful, deceptive and costly, the industrial giants have tended to fight shy of the profit motive. From much of the private sector's campaign literature it might be suspected that packaging was largely about public accountability and good works. For example, the Schweppes booklet on soft drink containers, engagingly subtitled 'Reconciling Convenience with Responsibility', almost manages to convince the reader that the product is a tonic for the nation. But little confidence is expressed in the idea that the primary aim is to increase the sales of Sch . . .

Here is the Head of Unilever Packaging Services writing in the journal *Consumer Education*. He lists seven reasons in defence of the company's successful packaging policy. Safety and protection rate a mention, but in the conspicuous absence of any reference to profit considerations I note the priority of 'environmental considerations'. So that's what the multi-million-pound battle between the whiter-than-white detergents was all about.

If industry has somewhat lost its nerve in correlating packaging with economic survival and appealing to our hardheads, the consumer lobby has no such reservations about making straight for the heart. The Consumer Group's Survey reveals a touching belief in us as customers. Many of the assumptions on which the report is based imply remarkable similarities between the great British buying public and a Fabian do-gooder. I can see her clearly between the lines (printed on 100 per cent re-cycled paper), stoutly resistant to the blandishments on the back of the cornflakes pack, moved to irritation by the *Zap! Pow! Zonk!* of brand images. Unaware of the strategies of pilferers and shoplifters, she is ever mindful of the waste of raw materials and pausing dutifully at the store checkpoint, she rejects the offer of a paper bag. She might be unamused by the claim to retain bags for the sale of mousetraps said to cause the public discomfiture. The packaging of embarrassment with its long history of cover-ups in our quirky island may be the last to go.

Despite elements of dottiness, however the consumer lobby case against conspicuous packaging has won many moral victories in a world of shrinking material resources and an energy crisis. Their warning – you know it doesn't make sense – is one that industry and government can no longer ignore. With increasingly rare exceptions, the fancy wrap is being phased out and laurels await the inventor of the no-can, the invisible wrap, and a sizing breakthrough in minimal jumbo. Even in cosmetics, where the pack is at least as important as the product, simplicity is gaining ground. A spokesman for Boots No reports that they have discarded some packs as customers seem to prefer to see what they are buying and that extra wraps can act as put-offs, not come-ons.

The overall picture is confused by growing nostalgia for the forms, design and graphics of packing both old and relatively new. These symbols of a consumer society painted by Andy Warhol and Claes Oldenburg are in the process of cultural recycling. John Lewis, Oxford Street is offering purses in the form of Heinz Baked Beans tins gone soft, original packs of Lifebuoy soap are selling briskly in collectors' corners and a new line in sweater patterns offers instructions on knitting your own Guinness. And I am passing the word round to collect aluminium milk bottle tops, which may shortly disappear. But alas, no news of a satisfactory resolution of the familiar toothpaste-top nuisance. The present closure, once removed in normal circumstances, disappears. An attached cap would surely have everything going for it, save perhaps that one of life's mysteries – where has the toothpaste-top gone? – would be solved for ever.

Rock Music–1

Richard North

Roadrunners

Racing Cars *The Marquee*

Racing Cars are a Welsh band whose following is newly-found and very devoted. Through the summer of 1976 they appeared off and on at the Nashville. The entire press went overboard. The Godfather, Peel, added his own plaudits (which are a rock what By Appointment is to groc At the Marquee nearly 1,000 people packed the place out: you could hardly breathe.

Cars are more Fangio than Hunt. Their bonnets are long, well-rounded and gleaming. Their wheels are slim, the windscreens upright and slight. They are quite fast but their performance has wit and panache as well as efficiency. They are more lyrical

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punk; more old hat than progressive. Often you can hear the blues in their playing. Sometimes there seems to be a hint of the ancient Bee Gees in their sweeter numbers. Someone suggested he could hear Humble Pie, and Steve Marriott particularly, as well. There's a lot of slide guitar, and some swamp-music style 'talking' guitar which is reminiscent of Tony Joe White. (Where, incidentally, is *he*?) They've just released a single, *They Shoot Horses Don't They*?, which ought to get to Number One.

The performance was taken mostly from their stunning debut album, *Downtown Tonight*, whose nine songs manage to range from funky, through country rock, to laid-back production numbers. They're even better live, with the extra bite that studio-antisepsis loses. Morty, the singer-songwriter, is very short and amazingly dynamic. He has the face of a pit-pony Jack Lemmon, alternately sorrowful and pugnacious, ready to take anyone on, but smiling all the while. He has a brother, the roadie, who came on and misbehaved himself gloriously: a real rocker (what we now call a punk), balancing beer mugs and crucifixes on his nose while belting out bits of Johnny B. Goode – the band's encore.

It's one of the peculiar rules of rock that when a band is hardly known you can dance to them; as they climb the success ladder you still stand, but there's no room to jig about; and when they're famous, you're made to sit and listen. Cars are at stage two: we all stood and sang alonga-Morty. The songs have that defining characteristic of classics: they seem to have been with you forever after a second hearing. Soon you will have to sit down to this band, more's the pity: the next stop might well be the Rainbow, or Hammersmith Odeon. Meanwhile, they're away for a month, burning up the European circuits. In their absence, try to see fellow South Wales band, *The Flying Aces*, whose second-half singer is a girl called George – with stuff all about being Sweet Twenty-six.

Rock Music–2

Mark Kidel

Street Sounds

Every few months the rock world rumbles with rumours of an imminent Beatles reunion: shady rock-biz impresarios conduct frenzied rounds of shuttle diplomacy, seeking to bring the Fab Four together again, if only for one night, plugged into the global village's satellite network and relayed to millions. Nothing has been quite the same since the mop-tops split up, and the world has been waiting for the Second Coming ever since.

But time and domesticity have irrevocably destroyed the group feeling that made of John, Paul, George and Ringo a pop archetype. All the projects have been still-born fantasies, and the fans, old and new, have had to make do with pathetic Beatles 'fairs' and 'festivals', where the absent idols have been worshipped with an almost necrophiliac zeal. The very powerful attraction of the Beatles today, over half a decade since the separation, is not just another wallow in nostalgia. EMI's re-release of many of the vintage singles last year was enormously successful in commercial terms, and it reflects the lasting value of the songs of Lennon and McCartney, a rare quality in an industry dedicated to planned musical obsolescence. It also points to the glaring absence of any contemporary equivalent.

1976 was characterised, along with a growing enthusiasm for well-crafted oldies and Sixties favourites, by a search for a new rock style. Soul, the urbane successor to the rawness of the blues, has grown increasingly slick, packaged for the robotic disco market. *Shaft*, the rise of the smooth black capitalist and bland discothèques have helped pull black music out of the ghettoes, and taken it a few steps further away from the jungle. While many black Americans, in the footsteps of Nat King Cole, have found respectability and money behind increasingly white masks, the roots enthusiasts have turned to the music of Jamaica, with its throbbing pulse and connections with poverty and social deprivation.

Reggae has existed for years, but it was only 'discovered' in 1976. Both mods and skinheads had been introduced to blue beat and ska by their black street companions, much in the way that America's 'white trash' had picked up on the blues. But it was not until the rock scene had developed desperate need for guts and a renewed identification with genuine popular culture that the pop charts were ready for reggae. Island Records, run by white Jamaican Chris Blackwell, but based in London, originally established itself as a viable commercial enterprise by selling West Indian pop in the UK. It was the same company – rich and successful on a series of very astute rock pickings – that pushed reggae to the fore, in particular with the widely acclaimed albums of Bob Marley and the Wailers. They came to Britain, backed by all the standard hype, and played to packed houses at the Hammersmith Odeon. Their music had none of the over-boogied staleness of the average rock gig: the mesmerizing beat flowed rather than bashed, and the words – the obscure but enchanting Rastafarian creed – were sung with unusual conviction.

The reggae boom had its paradoxes, though: the white fans yearned for the excitement of Trenchtown, but only so long as their wallets and handbags were safe. In the end, with the Hammersmith Odeon apparently thick with bag-snatchers and pick-pockets, many preferred the safety of vinyl and their home stereo sets. The stench of the jungle was just a little too much. Besides, unlike the Mississippi Delta blues singers or Chicago's R & B bands who had never been so lucky as to confront the problems of international success, Bob Marley was suddenly faced with the difficult conflicts arising out of hefty record sales and packed concert halls in the US and Europe: after all, reggae drew its strength in large part from a culture of hardship and poverty. Not surprisingly, Marley, who played benefit concerts for Michael Manley in Jamaica's general election, became the first rock star to be the victim of a political assassination attempt.

For all their cries about 'anarchy in the UK', there is little likelihood that any of the punk rockers will get seriously involved in the next general election. The punks, products of the rock machine for 1976, will probably still be around, their safety pins getting a little rusty, but they will be too busy posing to notice anything going on. Whereas the reggae boom represented the injection of a genuine alien musical form into the fabric of rock, punk has been essentially cannibalistic and nostalgic, revitalising myths, but leaving the music unchanged. Whereas reggae's complex rhythm can be heard in such white masterpieces as Steely Dan's *Haitian Divorce*, there is little chance that the punk influence will extend beyond the world of fashion.

The major musical trend of 1976, however, has had nothing to do with punks or rastas: it has been the arrival of 'Euro-rock', a hybrid of *schlager* and *chanson*, with an oompah beat guaranteed to set the judges at the Eurovision song contest drooling. There is no doubt that groups like Abba and Pussy Cat have an uncanny feel for the hummable hit single, but their songs are tailored for the metric pack, acceptable to every section of the EEC audience. As bland as the hordes of young continental tourists who descend on the Portobello Road market every Saturday morning during the season, with their meticulously pressed denims, the Euro-rockers are too well coiffured and sexlessly hermaphroditic. There is no doubt, however, that Abba and other smiling smoothies will rule – at least until a suitably depressed region produces a new strain of street music.

Throughout the coming year, scores of singles will pour out of the record pressing plants every week. Most of the music will hardly rise above the level of sausage-factory muzak. Once in a while, a record will appear that stands apart from the morass of sonic wallpaper. 1976 was an average year, but there have been a sprinkling of excellent LPs, particularly from Stevie Wonder (*Songs in the Key of Life*), Steely Dan (*The Royal Scam* – undoubtedly the most eloquent fusion of rock and jazz styles) and Kate and Anna McGarrigle's first album, which displays some of the most consistently high quality songwriting since Lennon and McCartney. As long as musicians like these continue to work outside the shackles of fashion, there will be no need for that long-awaited Beatles get-together.

Weekend Competition

No 2446 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

150-word extracts, please, from NS profiles of Noah, Hannibal, Henry VIII, etc, by 28 January.

No 2443 **Set by Luke Russell**

Competitors were asked to recast passages from the Bible in the style of any humorous writer.

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Report — by Len the Unlucky

A potent entry – and no space to laud it. £6 apiece for Littimer's Nash, Webster's De Vries, and Blundell's Wodehouse; £5 thereafter.

Which just shows how dumb it was of God
to strike *Apfelstrudel*
Off the paradisal Bill of Fare, because if there's
one food all Women have a yen for
It's the one item that *isn't* on the menu (and
what are men for
Except to get it for them?) – but whereas
Adam merely thought it *droll*
That the Biggest Daddy of Them All had
banned the one food that all reliable dietary
experts agree is utterly bereft of cholesterol,
Our Great-Grand-Mammy
(Who hailed from the Deep South of Adam's
rib-cage – the anatomical equivalent
of Alabammy)
Said: 'Ah don't think it's funny,
Honey,
When a lady has to beg pardon
For pluckin' the fruit of her *own* Garden –
And this gentleman-caller who came this
mornin' – and I do declare that ah've never
yet met a sobra
Cobra . . .'

SIMON LITTIMER

When you start life as a pun, what can you expect but trouble? My father, to the despair of his, was a wastrel – spendthrift, idle, and generous to a fault, especially his own. One day, some nine months before I was born, he was winnowing the chaff as usual at a certain tent of wickedness known as The Grapes of Wrath when Grandfather burst in and let rip such a diatribe that my father found himself promising, hand on heart, to 'get a job'. The old man departed, a passing belly dancer obliged, and I got gat.

W. J. WEBSTER

'Holy smoke, Jeeves!' I exclaimed, as the last of the Baal bimboes gave up the fire-lighting effort. 'That looks pretty grim, what!'

'It must be admitted, sir,' said Jeeves, 'that circumstances could be more propitious.'

'Holy smoke is precisely what poor old Elijah is going to need. De we pray, Jeeves?'

'It will not be necessary, sir,' said Jeeves, calmly. 'If you will observe, Mr Elijah has already succeeded in igniting his bonfire.'

And, dash it all, you know, so he had!

'Jeeves!' I said, 'I believe you had something to do with this!'

'Well, sir,' the blighter replied, 'I did take the liberty of surreptitiously inserting some paraffin-soaked rags into Mr Elijah's bonfire.'

'But the rags – ?'

'You will doubtless recall the purple-striped robe you recently purchased for evening wear, sir? I am afraid I was obliged to use that. It really did not become you, sir.'

G. J. BLUNDELL

After their first rash sex
Adam and Eve wore a *cache-sexe*;
He said, 'This stunt'll
Avoid the embarrassment of a full frontal.
(Good thing fig leaves
Are big leaves).'

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

'I say you fellows, no need to get shirty with a chap just because he speaks his mind. I mean, where I come from a fellow can say what he likes, you know.'

'Ha! Ha! Ha!'

'Oh really! Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!'

'The cacklefulness is terriffic!'

'Collar him!'
'Boot him!'
'CRUCIFY HIM!'
'Yarooo! Ow! Wow! Greeoooogh! Ow! Leggo you beasts! . . .'

SIMON DALLY

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, 'I demand to be feared!
Address me as God,
And love me, you sod!'
And Man did just that, which is weird.

NAOMI MARKS

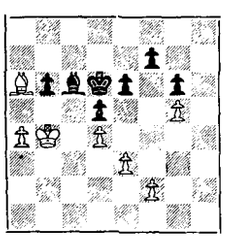
Tony Miles

Chess

No 16 — **At Hastings**

This weekend sees the final round of the Hastings Premier tournament, and I expect (this column is written after Round 8) that first place has already been clinched by the Russian Oleg Romanishin. However, to continue the saga of my own (mis)adventures at Hastings. As I mentioned last week I decided to give the rest of the field 2 points start before actually beginning to play sensibly.

The third round saw a change of fortune with the first of a fascinating trio of endgames. After 52 rather nondescript moves I reached the following position against Andrew Whiteley.



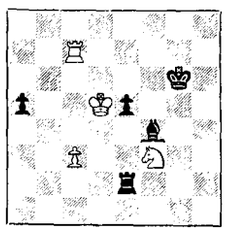
I continued with **53. B-N5.** Now the K+P ending is an easy win: white liquidates the Q-side with P-R5, brings his K to QB5, plays P-B3 and P-K4 which black must capture. Then white creates a passed QP and uses it to divert the black K while his own penetrates to KB6. So black avoided the exchange with . . . **B-R1!**

Here there are several tries: (a) 54. B-K8, K-R2; 55. B x P?, K x B; 56. K-N5, K-K2; 57. K x P, K-Q3 followed by B-B3 and black wins! (b) 54. P-B4, B-B3! and the K+P ending is no longer won. (c) 54. P-B3 (the most subtle) B-N2? (or 54 . . . K-K2; 55. P-R5! winning); 55. B-K8!, K-K2; 56. B x P!, K x B; 57. K-N5, K-K2; 58. K x P, B-B1; 59. K-B7!, B-R3; 60. P-R5!; and white wins. But unfortunately black has 54. . . . P-K4! and the possibility of B-N2-B1 gives enough breathing space to draw.

So I tried a 4th move: **54. P-R5, P x P ch; 55. K x P, B-N2; 56. K-N6, B-B1** (now . . . P-K4 is again threatened); **57. P-B4, B-Q2; 58. B x B, K x B, 59. K-N7, K-Q1; 60. K-B6, K-B1??** (*missing the point* – he must head for KN2); **61. K-Q6, K-Q1; 62. P-B5!, KP x P** (or 62. . . . NP x P; 63. P-N6!; P x P; 64. K x P, followed by K-B6 winning all black's pawns). **63. K x P, K-Q2; 64. K-K5, K-K2; 65. P-Q5, K-Q2; 66. K-B6, K-Q3; 67. K x P, K x P; 68. K x P, K-K4; 69. K-B7, K-K5; 70. K-B6, Resigns.**

Next came a R+P ending against the American Vukcevic: I (black) now played **28. . . . R-KB2** forcing the win of a P. The game continued **29. P-R5** (best), **R x QBP; 30. P x P** (the alternative is 30. R-Q2), **R-B7ch!; 31. K-B3** (31. K-R3? leaves the K vulnerable to threats along the 7th rank), **P x P.** There is much (inconclusive!) theory on this type of ending with one pair of Rs and generally with the K-side Ps on B2, N3 and R4. But with another pair of Rs and the changed P formation, both Ks are exposed to mating threats and tactics abound. **32. R-Q8 ch, K-N2; 33. R-QN8** (normally the best place for the R – behind the passed P), **R-QN7; 34. R-K6, R-Q2!; 35. K-K3?** (not 35. R(8) x P?? R-Q6 ch but 35. R-K2 was better), **R x P!** (Usually 3 against 2 on the same side is drawn but here the NP is vulnerable). **36. R(6) x P, R-R6!; 37: K-B2** (If 37. R-N7, R x P ch and R(6)-Q6), **R-Q7 ch; 38. K-K3, R-Q2;** (*time trouble*) **39. K-B2, R-Q7 ch; 40. K-K3, R-KN7; 41. R(6)-N7 ch, K-R3** and now white sealed **42. R-KR8** but resigned without further play because of the forced line 42. . . . R(6) x P ch; 43. K-Q4, R-Q7 ch; 44. K-B5 (44. K-K5, R-K6 ch; 45. K-B6, R-Q3 ch and the white King interferes with its own Rs) K-R4 and 45. K-N5 when with the white King so far cut off the BP is doomed.

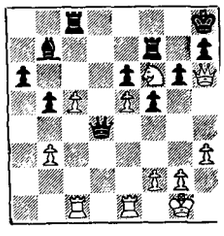
The last of the trio was against ex-world champion Vassily Smyslov. Having experimented with Ponziani's opening I obtained a sufficiently favourable position to decline an offer of a draw. (I was not worse throughout as some press reports indicated!) but then went badly astray and reached the following position at the adjournment.



I sealed **41. R-B5!** with the clever (or so I thought) intention of . . . R-K6; 42. N-Q4!, P x N; 43. K x P when the remarkable piece configuration prevents black defending his P by B-B2, R-K4, R-QR6, or after . . . P-R5; 44. R-R5 by K-B4 intending R-K5 ch and finally the B prevents . . . R-KR7 followed by R-R5 ch. Thus white forces a theoretically drawn R v R+B position.

I was feeling rather pleased with myself (not to mention relieved) when suddenly over dinner, a horrible thought struck me: after 41. . . . R-K6; 42. N-Q4??, P x N; 43. K x P black has . . . R-K4!! and now 44. R x R, B x R ch; 45 K x B – the unfortunate P on B3 prevents white from catching the black RP. I narrowly avoided choking and rushed off to find an alternative. Luckily there was one. The game continued **41. . . . R-K6; 42. N-R4 ch, K-B3** (hoping for 43. N-N2, R-K7!; 44. N x B, P x N winning – in a similar line after 42. . . . K-N4 then 45. R x P draws). **43. R x P!, R x P; 44. R-R6 ch, K-N4; 45. N-N6, R-Q6 ch; 46. K-B4, P-K5; 47. R-K6!** forcing a remarkable study-like draw. If 47. . . . K-B4; 48. R x P!!, K x R; 49. N x B drawing, or 47. . . B-Q7; 48. R x P, R-B6 ch; 49. K-Q4, K x N; 50. R-K2, R-B7; 51. K-Q3! Smyslov looked gloomily at the position for 10 minutes and played **47. . . . R-KB6** but after **48. K-Q5** conceded the draw since on . . . P-K6 (. . . K-B4?; 49. N-R4 ch); 49. N x B, K x N; 50. K-Q4 followed by R-Q4 ch.

Problem 16:
White to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 26 January.



Solutions to problems 13 and 14 which appeared in the Christmas issue of the NS will be published in two weeks time.

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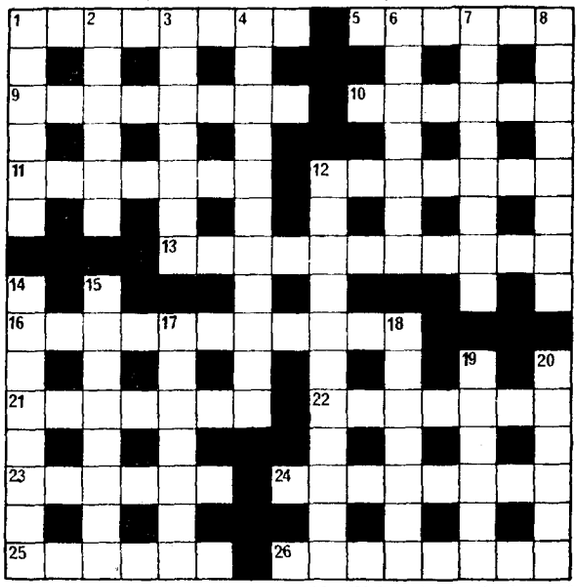


ACROSS

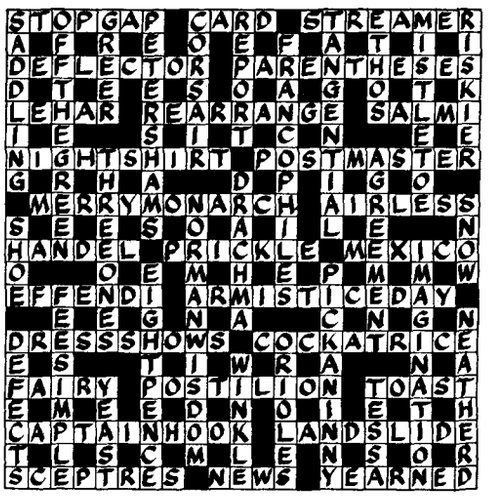
1. The winter sports movement, we hear, makes an impact on television (8).
5. Masculine rage at poor accommodation for baby (6).
9. 'Cut off even in the —— of my sin' (*Hamlet*) (8).
10. Welcoming looks for Samuel (6).
11. It's nothing to be a courageous person: it's in the head (7).
12. A place for leather (7).
13. Give symbol of team membership to the speedy, although they don't run (4, 7).
16. Bury an iron hoop when not minding one's own business (11).
21. Where to climb for what is left by the apple-picker (7).
22. Abuse although alive to change (7).
23. If you saw little me tickled pink, you'd recognise the medicine (6).
24. The ruler of a tribe discovers the noise a prisoner may make (8).
25. Female without a saying for old age (6).
26. Ill-used young lady in confinement (8).

DOWN

1. Forbidden things bring expression of gratitude before disapproval (6).
2. Name of two individuals in the fifties (6).
3. Animal which makes the old lady uncomfortable (7).
4. Reminding one not long ago about cars (11).
6. Sailor who turns a liar mad (7).
7. Beat backwards and forwards as a means of playing (8).
8. Wrongly press one for an answer (8).
12. Italian possibly left alive after high speed (11).
14. Seaside resort for the colliery manager? (8).
15. Having the greatest inclination (8).
17. 'For heathen heart that puts her trust In —— tube and iron shard' (Kipling) (7).
18. Basic reasons why it may be coffee (7).
19. Married a girl for spite (6).
20. Importance of a London district (6).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1196



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M. G. Cormack (Belfast)
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Vol. 93 No. 2391

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Theatres

ALMOST FREE THEATRE, 9 Rupert St, W1. 01-485 6224. Open. 10 Jan. 'Patty Hearst' by William Tanner. 1.15 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

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THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. Until 5 Feb. 'Jack and the Beanstalk' with Trevor Bannister and Bryan Burdon.

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Meetings

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled 'A View of Tax Reform' will be given by Professor R. W. Parsons (Sydney) at Queen Mary College, (Drapers' Lecture Theatre), Mile End Road, London E1 on 20 January 1977 at 5.15 p.m. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

TRIBUNE 40th BIRTHDAY RALLY, Central Hall, Westminster. Thurs. 20 Jan. 7 p.m. Speakers include: Michael Foot, Jimmy Reid, James Cameron, Barbara Castle, Lawrence Daly, Tony Benn, Paddy Devlin, Jack Jones, Judith Hart, Peggy Duff, Clive Jenkins, Fenner Brockway, Donald Soper, Ken Coates, Mike Gapes, Mark Sanders, Richard Clements. Joint Chairmen: Ian Mikardo, Neil Kinnock. Admission 50p.

SUNDAY 16 JANUARY, 8 p.m. 'Facism and Anti-Semitism' – a historical analysis by Alan Elsner of UJS. Organised by Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6. Finchley Road tube.

ALBANIA'S VIITH CONGRESS. Report back by Reg Birch, Chairman, Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), delegate to Albania's VIIth Congress. Friday 21 Jan. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. 7.30 p.m.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Park, W11. Sun. 16 Jan. 5 p.m. 'An Outline of Vedanta Philosophy' by Swami Bhavyananda. All welcome. Vedanta mag. 40p.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled 'Negation and the Origins of Logic' will be given by Professor G. E. L. Owen (University of Cambridge) at King's College London (Room 3B20), Strand, WC2R 2LS at 5.15 p.m., on 21 January 1977. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

PRESS MEETS THE PUBLIC

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SEX, SEXISM AND THE PRESS
Wed 19 Jan. – 7 p.m.

Speakers:
Derek Jameson, Managing Editor, Daily Mirror.
Anna Coote, NUJ Equality Working Party.
Roger Baker, Men Only.
Alison Hennegan, Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

Portland Hall,
School of Communication,
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London W1.

Next meeting:
THE PRESS ON EDUCATION.

Further information:
01-486 5811 ext 6527.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT, *Lunch Hour Lectures*. 1.20 to 2. 18 Jan. 'The English Civil War: the lighter side' by C. V. Wedgwood; 20 Jan. 'An approach to computer-assisted learning' by Dr J. McKenzie. Admission free. Details of Public Lectures from Publications Office (send stamped envelope).

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Department of German, Public Lectures, 2 p.m. Admission Free. 20 Jan. *'The Secularisation of Religious History* from Herder to Schleiermacher' by Dr Nicholas Boyle.

'THE CONSERVATIVE CASE' by Andrew Bell (Conservative Research Department). London Young Humanists. 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W8. Sun. 16 Jan. 7.30 p.m.

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Fee £5, includes free copy of **'Civil Liberties and a Bill of Rights'**, by Peter Wallington, to be published by the Cobden Trust, background papers, lunch and refreshments.

Details and booking forms from: **Tim Gopsill, Cobden Trust, 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DE, phone 01-278 4575.**

'TOWARDS GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING Education about the Commonwealth'. Spe ers Professor Lionel Elvin and Dr Pe Lyon. 6.30, p.m. Thursday 13 January the Focus Group Meeting, Royal Comm wealth Society, 18 Northumberland Aven WC2. *Tube*, Embankment or Trafalgar Adm. 20p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Squ London SW1. Sat. 15 Jan. 3 p.m. 'O Day'. Tues. 18 Jan. 6.30 p.m. 'Introduc Buddhism'. Wed. 19 Jan. 6.30 p.m. Pu Lecture 'The Search Within' – Christr Humphreys. All welc. S.a.e. for full pr

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